March 1983
Volume 11 Number 1

MISSION FOCUS

Community-Centered Evangelism in Light of Acts 2-15

DENNIS BYLER

I must at the outset state my personal commitment to community. I am a member of the community of the Fellowship of Hope in Elkhart, Indiana. We have been led, in following Christ, to adopt a series of communal disciplines. The most outstanding of these is probably our mutual submission and accountability in all areas of life. The most visible discipline, an outgrowth of the former, is our total economic sharing, carried out through a common treasury. Regarding evangelism,

> *From the beginning of the Fellowship, the most important and fundamental strategy for evangelism was for the church to be the redeemed people of God, who by their life and love for each other and allegiance to Jesus as Lord witness to and proclaim the Kingdom of Jesus. This loving, caring, healing community, this "being" the church, this "light on the hill" was seen to be a mission strategy in itself, and without this witness all other strategies were seen to be short-circuited.*
>
> *This understanding reflects the impact of the Anabaptist perspective as stated by John H. Yoder, "The new Christian community in which the walls are broken down . . . by the work of Christ is not only a vehicle of the gospel or a fruit of the gospel; it is the good news. It is not merely the agent of mission or the constituency of a mission agency. This is the mission"* (Yoder, 1969:274).
>
> *While "being" the church was the primary strategy, the central goal of the church was seen to be the incorporating of converts into this new social order and "perfecting" itself to increasingly give witness to the breaking in of God's Kingdom into the world. In essence, goals and strategies became one* (Derstine, 1981).

Community-centered evangelism in Acts 2-15

With this background in mind the following observations from the Acts narrative arise.

1. Passages such as Acts 2:14-47 and chapter 8 show clearly that the task of propagating the gospel was undertaken, at least as the Acts record shows, by means of preaching. We might even call it mass evangelism. Acts 2, for all its spontaneity, is certainly a media event! A good, wholesome, functioning, deeply committed, discipling community is not a stated prerequisite for successful evangelism. Rather, Christian community is the **result** of the conversions which follow the evangelistic proclamation (2:41-47). The example of the previously existing community, like the teachings of the apostles, bore results only among those who were converted by means of proclamation of the gospel.

We may therefore conclude that the gospel must be clearly spoken, verbally communicated, for evangelism to take place. We may consider our community life to be a witness, but we should not assume it is an **evangelistic** witness, at least not in the sense of clearly confronting the observer with the need to decide for or against following Jesus.

2. The gospel preached is the story of Jesus of Nazareth—the significance of his life, death, resurrection, and his condition as the long-awaited Jewish Messiah. Only one reference is to

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Jesus' **teaching:** Acts 8:12 mentions the kingdom of God. Under the pen of Luke the Evangelist, this must certainly refer to Jesus' revolutionary teaching on social relationships and lifestyle. But community concerns as such are nowhere else touched upon in the recorded evangelistic sermons in these chapters.

3. The proclamation of the gospel produces not only repentance, baptism, and the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). It brings about life consequences. The new disciples devote themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to comradeship. They eat. They pray. They experience miracles, togetherness. They praise God. They share at least an attitude, if not a carefully structured working out, of communitarian values concerning property (2:42-47).

We may want to reason as Luke does that the emergence of a communitarian lifestyle is what proves that God's grace is blessing the evangelistic endeavor: A great grace was upon them as they witnessed to the resurrection of Jesus, goes the reasoning in Acts 4:33-34, because no one among them had needs which were unmet. This is not the result of a mystical living by faith, but of the practical steps taken by some who were actually selling their real estate in order to provide for needs.

4. The last phrase of Acts 2 is interesting. After describing the emergence of communitarian attitudes and practices among the new converts, Luke adds that consequently they were given a special grace among the people, whereby the Lord daily increased the number of the saved. Though the point has been made above that community was the **result** rather than the **means** of evangelism, we may be given to understand here that once attention is focused on God's people because of a proclamation, people may begin to take note of the community's lifestyle and be drawn to salvation through this means as well.

5. Given the explicit importance in Luke's narrative of individuals such as Peter, Philip, and Paul in the evangelistic task, we may conclude that certain individuals are especially gifted for fruitful proclamation of the gospel. (We may note that this happens to be in line with Paul's list of ministries in Ephesians 4.)

6. Individuals in the community who are gifted for evangelism seem to need a great deal of personal liberty to engage in their ministry at the Spirit's leading. Both the motivation and the execution of Philip's approaching the Ethiopian official (Acts 8:26ff.) were charismatic. This event did not involve the community in carefully discerning where Philip should go next. It was a personal religious experience; Philip was accountable only to the Holy Spirit. The experience was accompanied by para-normal manifestations outside the control of communitarian structures and disciplines.

When Peter was invited to Cornelius' home (Acts 10), he went on the basis of community approval of this project (although several members of the community did accompany him (10:23), perhaps indicating some kind of prior consultation as well). Once Paul and Barnabas' calling to an itinerant evangelistic ministry was unanimously confirmed by the community leadership at Antioch and they were formally commissioned to carry out their ministry, they were basically on their own. Their chief source of guidance and direction from then on was the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:4). (They of course also had **each other** to talk with!)

7. Yet evangelists also seem to be consistently accountable, if after the fact, concerning their actions. In Acts 11:1-18 Peter submitted the new steps taken in the heat of his evangelistic ministry to the careful scrutiny of the Jerusalem community. He was a powerfully gifted evangelist, with all the personal freedom of action this requires in light of the Holy Spirit's unpredictable leading. Yet he still felt the need to give to the community an account for his actions. Similarly Paul in Acts 15 submitted his practical and theological innovations to the close scrutiny of the community. Though in following the Spirit these evangelists must have often decided on their own what seemed best, yet they never shied away from accountability to the community (see also Acts 14:26-28).

8. Though Philip appears to have usually traveled alone, Peter was usually accompanied (by John in Acts 8:14-25, by unnamed companions in Acts 10), as was Paul (by Barnabas in Acts 13-15, by Silas, Timothy, and others later). In like manner, people in the community who are gifted for evangelism may often wish to be accompanied by at least one other person when traveling. Even if such fellow travelers are not accomplished evangelists themselves, and may well appear to be minor figures, their influence and counterbalance may prove salutary.

We may note the important role of such companions in Acts 10:47-48. Peter consulted with others before proceeding with

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MISSION FOCUS (ISSN 0164-4696) is published quarterly at 500 S. Main St., Elkhart, Indiana, by Mennonite Board of Missions. Single copies available without charge. Send correspondence to Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515. Second-class postage paid at Elkhart, Ind., and at additional mailing offices. Lithographed in USA.
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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MISSION FOCUS, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

the radical new initiative of baptizing Gentiles. Even though Peter had enjoyed unparalleled authority among the disciples of Jesus, he humbly submitted his novel theological discoveries, arrived at in the exercise of his evangelistic ministry, to the examination and counsel of others with different gifts.

9. As Peter delivered his Pentecost sermon the other eleven stood together with him (Acts 2:14). That Cornelius' supernaturally inspired invitation was extended to Peter alone is also significant (Acts 10:22); yet when Peter heeded the invitation (10:23), he took others with him. Like Peter, community-based evangelists will wish to find ways to make their solidarity with the whole community graphically visible.

10. Evangelists should not assume they have the totality of spiritual gifts. In Acts 8:5-8 we can see some gifts in operation. Philip was evidently a gifted public speaker, charismatically empowered to do great miracles. The people listened closely to him "with one mind"; that is, they all were equally spellbound by his words. Not a single bored listener! They saw him perform signs and dramatic public exorcisms. The utterly bedridden and the crippled began getting up and walking about! Philip showed amazing insight into the situation of the person he approached (8:30). Similar gifts were at work in other preachers. In the ministry of Peter (Acts 5:15; 9:32-42) incredible powers of healing were at work.

But Philip in particular did not have some gifts. Simon the Sorcerer was able to attach himself closely to him without his true motives being discerned until Peter arrived (Acts 8:13ff.). Most telling of all, the Holy Spirit bodily removed Philip from the Ethiopian official after he explained one single passage from Isaiah and baptized him (8:29). Why was Philip not allowed to pursue lifestyle and community concerns with the new convert? Here, as in Samaria, and later as well (8:40), his particular gift seems to be limited only to announcing the good tidings dramatically and then moving on. We never see Philip exercising the gifts of post-baptismal maintenance, instruction, and discipline in his converts in order to integrate the diverse lone converts into a community.

From the acerbic disagreement Paul and Barnabas had regarding Mark (Acts 15:36-41), it would appear that the very gifts that made them convincing evangelists may well have worked against their being able to concede a point. People gifted for evangelism may not be the easiest people to live with in community. Those who possess a gift of clarity and certainty when expressing their beliefs, coupled perhaps with a gift for simplifying the complex into essential principles, may also be opinionated, stubborn, and impatient with those who disagree with them.

11. Along the same lines, community-based evangelists should not necessarily be expected to found communities, follow up on their converts, and do other such maintenance tasks. Comparing Paul's and Philip's ministries, we might say an **apostle** may well be able to do this as well as preach the good news; but it should not be seen as a shortcoming if an **evangelist** does not.

12. This implies that it may well be up to the sending, supporting community to see that community emerges where the evangelist has been. No clue to how this might be accomplished is provided in Acts. May we speculate that other people, with other gifts, may have followed Philip as he went from town to town with the gospel?

The concluding paragraphs of chapters two and four of Acts (observation 3, above) show clearly that the gospel, when fully accepted, brings about communitarian attitudes and practices. In light of this, if some form of Christian community does not arise where the gospel has been preached, one cannot help but wonder to what extent the gospel has really been received. Since, particularly in the case of Philip, the task of founding communities is not the evangelist's, responsibility for it must lie elsewhere.

13. This task is obviously much simpler when converts are in the same place as a previously existing community. Luke describes such people as merely being "added to" the previous disciples (Acts 2:47). We may assume that in such communities structures were sufficiently flexible to allow for this process. It could not have been excessively difficult to join!

14. Paul and Barnabas' first trip, described in Acts 13:4 through chapter 14, shows perhaps something of an ideal cycle for community-based evangelists or apostles at work. First, they arrived in a town and began preaching the gospel. This resulted in the emergence of a group of people called "the disciples." Then the evangelists visited these groups of disciples on their return trip. At that time elders were appointed: Enough time elapsed to test the relative faithfulness and maturity of the different converts. Third, upon their arrival back at Antioch, Paul and Barnabas gathered the assembly and gave a report. They seem to have had a need to be accountable to the sending community. Finally, they **remained in Antioch** for a time (Acts 14:28). This was possibly a time to get back in touch with community life, observe changes in emphases, take note of the present reality of the common life. Possibly it was a time for rounding out the vision anew to realize there is more to Christianity than saving souls.

As with Paul and Barnabas, people commissioned for evangelism may profit from a periodic return to a more fully integrated, submitted, quiet condition within the community. This may be especially necessary for those who engage in a lot of travel.

15. We see in the general pattern of the Book of Acts, as well as in the specific pattern of Paul upon arriving in a new city, a special concern with preaching the gospel to the Jews first. This follows the example of Jesus and has important significance for our understanding of the meaning of evangelism.

The only evangelism Jesus—and his disciples during his first lifetime—did was to call to a deeper commitment on the part of those who were already aware of their status as God's chosen people. Throughout the Gospels, evangelism took place only among those who already believed in God and were self-consciously part of the stream of holy history. For Jesus, to preach the gospel was to advocate a more consistent, more deeply rooted living out of **a faith already held.**

Only in Acts, especially with Paul's ministry, is the concept of evangelism applied as well to Gentiles. In light of this, we may wish to reevaluate the ministry of calling other Christians to a more fully committed carrying out of the implications of believing in Jesus. We may discover it useful to refer to this also as evangelism, in a wider sense. In doing so, we may discover that some communities are actually more evangelistic than we were willing to concede. In fact their own particular kind of evangelism may more closely parallel Jesus' ministry than preaching to non-Christians. (The latter would perhaps more closely parallel Paul's ministry.) Can we reason in this manner without ignoring a real challenge to call unbelievers to faith, which God may be impressing upon us regardless?

Further implications for evangelism today

We should not automatically assume that the exact patterns we have discovered in Acts will work in the same ways today. Notable differences exist between our society and that of the first century.

1. Geographical separation does not necessarily exclude close communication and consultations today. How much of the

freedom of action the evangelists in Acts enjoyed was caused by the Holy Spirit's sovereign demands? How much was imposed by the circumstances of distance and poor communication?

2. People's previous exposure to the techniques of mass evangelism, coupled with the general depersonalization of our society and the consequent thirst for meaningful personal relationships, may make a more personalized form of evangelism relatively more important today than it was in the first century.

3. We cannot equate the church with community today, as may have been possible in Acts. Therefore a high percentage of those who join Christian communities may already have been Christians, quite independently of the community's preaching to unbelievers.

4. Similarly, within the movement into communities are many differences. The existence of specialized communities, such as the community for drug-addict rehabilitation at Quintanadueñas, Spain, means that evangelism will have different implications for different communities, according to their particular calling. This kind of variety is not mentioned in Acts.

5. In the days of Peter, Philip, and Paul, the good news was good **news.** Today it is often a tired old message, loaded with the interpretative freight of centuries of **bad** news in Christian history. However, the radical **discipleship** demands that the gospel makes are not a tired old message. To preach the gospel of Jesus is to preach him as risen Lord and Master, not only as Savior. A committed Christian community is still the best platform from which to proclaim this gospel with integrity.

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The Anabaptist Understanding of Jesus' Great Commission

HEINOLD FAST

How necessary is mission as part of the task of a Mennonite congregation? What does the mission of a congregation in the Anabaptist tradition look like? Where does a Christian congregation get its mandate for mission in a world in which no one wants to be converted, but where people want to convert others? How are Mennonite congregations able to engage in mission? The Anabaptist understanding of Jesus' Great Commission involves elements of all these questions.

How is a historian able to give clues in searching for an answer? A subject which commands such a wide interest can be dangerous. The way a question is phrased could predispose the answer; the historian could be tempted to read into the sources what is not actually there. How easily we idealize the past and seek out only proof texts for an already established viewpoint. The result of such idolization of our past would be to see only the admirable side of the Anabaptist story which would say all subsequent history was a falling away from a golden period.

On the other hand, without such an interest, without the questions being asked in light of our work in the congregation, we would have no need to carry on historical studies. I hope to learn from history both essential ingredients and methods for carrying out the task of a Christian congregation. Therefore, I entertain the questions, despite the danger of reading our history with less-than-objective eyes. Indeed, the Mennonite Historical Society *(Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein)* does not want to carry on research of our history as a pure end in itself, but to provide understanding of our past to enable congregations in mission. It is a happy day when questions raised by congregations demand something from the historical society!

Translation of Scripture

The original Luther translation in German (parallel to the King James Version) of Matthew 28:18-20 says, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost and teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

A glance of the *Täuferakte*, which have an index of Scripture references, shows that this was the most quoted Scripture passage among the Anabaptists. With this passage infant bap-

tism could be renounced easily and clearly, and the legitimacy of baptism by faith demonstrated. The Anabaptists could prove clearly that three steps in an unchangeable sequence are necessary to bring the good news into the world: 1) "Teach all nations," 2) "baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," 3) "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Therefore, the good news first needs to be taught, preached, heard, and believed before baptism takes place. That is not possible with infants. Thus follows the demand that only those be baptized who understand and can answer for their belief.

We find this sequence even more clearly in the Marcan parallel of Jesus' Great Commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:15-16). Here faith occurs in sequence explicitly between preaching and baptizing. The command gains a sense of urgency because the decision of salvation is linked to the decision of faith. No one can avoid making a response to the gospel. Early Anabaptist writings show again and again that people came to faith and joined the Anabaptists because of this passage.

Among the first Anabaptists, likely Felix Mantz discovered the importance of the Great Commission for their view of baptism. Mantz addressed the issue in his "Protestation" of December 1524—before the first Anabaptist baptism took place. He did not want to focus on mission, but on a new understanding of Christian baptism. The route, nonetheless, led to mission. On February 18, 1525, about a month after the first Anabaptist baptism, Mantz wrote a letter to the city council at Zürich:

> *On behalf of the clear instruction and institution of the one who manages and commands everything, Christ has come to annul the sin of Adam, in whom we would be dead if God had not sent his Son and given him all power in heaven and on earth, that everyone who would call his name and trust in him would have eternal life.*
>
> *Therefore Christ has sent forth his disciples, commanding that they should go to teach all nations that all power was given unto him by God his Father, and that through his death all those who call upon his name would find forgiveness of their sins. To make it externally visible, he commanded to baptize them. When I taught exactly the same, some came to me in tears and begged that I should baptize them. I could not deny that to them, but did it at their request. I called on the name of Christ over them and instructed them further in love and unity and community to have all things in common as the apostles did in Acts 2. That they always should be mindful of the death of Christ and not forget his shed blood, I explained to them the way of Christ, how he had the last supper and we had bread and wine together at the same time . . . ."

A whole theology, but also Mantz's personal experience in obedience to the Great Commission, shines through these lines. In our context I want to stress only the connection between baptism and mission. Mantz preached all of what was connected with his new understanding of baptism: a new understanding of himself, his past, and his new possibilities. This he wove into the broader context of the salvation history from Adam to Christ. In retelling the salvation story to others, they too were affected. A chain reaction occurred. The mission was already going when he realized that he was a missionary.

For the Anabaptists' understanding of the Great Commission, the charge was not coming just from the **command,** but from all that they understood as connected with **baptism.** Therefore, they had no question that this Scripture passage relating mission and baptism was of central significance. Its centrality is shown in that it was of similar importance for all the various streams of Anabaptists. As different as these groups were, practicing believers baptism remained consistent, especially in the sequence of preaching, baptizing, and teaching, which meant nothing less than mission work.

Gottfried Gerner, who has done the most extensive work on the Anabaptists and the Great Commission, says that the dogmatic of the formulated sequence in the command to baptize is the lifeblood of the whole Anabaptist movement. This is where the key to all the Scriptures is found for them: "The specific hermeneutic of the Anabaptists is an apostolic hermeneutic, one of inescapable 'sentness,' one of mission." While Luther interpreted Scripture by what advances Christ *(was Christum treibet),* the Anabaptists judged the Scripture by what advances mission *(was missionem treibet).*

Martin Luther unwittingly gave the Anabaptists a start toward their interpretation of the Great Commission; he translated the Great Commission incorrectly. The Anabaptists, relying on Luther's translation, were arguing against his infant baptism, something they could not have done if Luther had translated more carefully. But even Luther has to be excused here. Apparently he did not use the Greek original with this passage, just the Latin Vulgate. The correct reading of the Great Commission is: "Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

Instead of the charge to "teach all nations," the phrase, "make disciples of all nations," appears. Instead of the three steps, "to preach, to baptize, to teach," two steps appear: "to make disciples of all nations" by baptizing them and teaching them to observe all things. Therefore disciples are won by baptizing them first, and then teaching them. This translation was already known in those days and is generally accepted today. How shall we evade this dilemma?

We may refer to Mark 16:15-16 where the former sequence holds true: to preach, to believe, to baptize, to be saved. But the Marcan text, as is generally accepted, is a later addition. It is missing in the oldest manuscripts. Therefore it is freely retold after Matthew by later writers. The most we could say is that apparently these writers understood Matthew the same way the Anabaptists did. But it is no longer the irrefutable basis for the Anabaptists' belief.

Already 455 years ago Zwingli stood up against the Anabaptists by arguing that because of the sequence in just one biblical passage we cannot assume anything which is contradictory to other parts of the Holy Bible. We must examine such basic questions as baptism and Christian mission on a broader biblical base. We, the descendants of Zwingli's opponents, are now forced to use the same argument in favor of the Anabaptists. A view of mission which was so much the center of all thinking and doing of a movement of faith must be reassured in all directions. If the Great Commission no longer gives clarity to what the Anabaptists found there, and it really is a Scripture-based theology of mission, its roots should be detected in other parts of the Bible too. The Anabaptists saw in the Great Commission more than they should have, but that is not to say that they were unbiblical in their methods.

Variations in understanding

Even though the Great Commission could be found in nearly all Anabaptist groups, it stood in such diverse contexts that its

direction and sense could be entirely changed. Even though all did mission, they might have done it with different goals or in a different manner. The Great Commission must be seen within the framework of all Anabaptist hermeneutics, not only because we can recognize the biblical root of the Anabaptist understanding of mission, but also because we learn better to discern the spirits.

Our purpose here is not to expound on the whole range of disparate views and nuances among the Anabaptists. We will choose two and slightly stylize them because 1) all people are a mixture of different positions, and 2) we are more concerned here about general direction rather than nuances. First we treat the broader context of the Great Commission held by Felix Mantz and his fellow believers in Switzerland and then compare it to the theology of mission of Melchior Hoffman in North Germany and the Netherlands.

Rule of Christ

In Felix Mantz's "Protestation" the Great Commission is central, but not isolated from other biblical passages. It rather belongs to a sequence, starting with Jesus' baptism by John and moving through both versions of the Great Commission to the sermons on mission by Peter and Paul in Acts 10 to 22. The significance of the Great Commission, therefore, is not self-explanatory, but is interpreted by the evangelistic activity of the apostles. Mantz finds exactly the same sequence as Luther's translation of the Great Commission: preaching, faith, baptism. Significantly, the act of mission makes that clear. Mission and theology of baptism condition each other. Even if believers baptism cannot be deduced from a correct translation of Matthew 28, with the progression of "to baptize" and "to teach," the apostles in fact acted that way.

If we backtrack from this apostolic praxis to find what the Great Commission actually meant, we are exactly in line with the Anabaptist understanding, even though it was based on a wrong translation. Here is a paradox: The wrong translation is closer to the intended meaning than is the correct one.

The theology of atonement which Felix Mantz used to supplement his interpretation of Matthew 28 is based on other biblical references: "Conversion through the Word of God," "changing of the mind," "renewing of conduct," "dying to the old life," "being buried in baptism," "resurrection through renewal of life," "forgiveness of sins." These are catchwords which are scattered through the New Testament and included in this context because of the special understanding of baptism and mission. Mantz said, "The New Testament is full of such and similar proofs." If we look at the professional theologian among the Anabaptists, Balthasar Hubmaier, we see how he put these catchwords in a systematic order throughout his writings.

We move on to the part of Anabaptist interpretation of the Great Commission which should be decisive for the Swiss Anabaptists. Mantz wrote to the Zürich authorities about the baptisms he conducted: "I instructed them further in love and unity and community of all things, as the apostles did in Acts 2, that they always should be mindful of the death of Christ and not forget Christ's shed blood, and explained to them the way of Christ and how he had the last supper and we had bread and wine together at the same time."

Without question Mantz here referred to the third point of the Great Commission: "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded unto you." Part of the uniqueness of the Anabaptists—who later were called the Swiss Brethren and were the ancestors of the Swiss, Alsatian, and South-German Mennonites—is that they put special emphasis on this third point. As the formulation of Mantz shows, this teaching does not refer just to teaching but to "love, unity, and community of all things," a community which has its high point in celebrating the last supper in remembrance of the death of Jesus. In other words, if the Great Commission was the constitution of the Anabaptist movement, then for Mantz one constituent of the Great Commission was the congregation.

Concrete points of community for Mantz were "community of all things," which meant material goods and the sharing of communion. Conrad Grebel and Balthasar Hubmaier added another point to their theology of the congregation—namely the **rule of Christ,** which meant mutual exhortation in view of the failures also within the congregation.

What Grebel and Hubmaier named rule of Christ we think of today as church discipline. But this term awakens wrong associations. We think of public denunciation of sinfulness, the banning of a sinner, and consequent purity of the church. But as a matter of fact in Matthew 18:15-20, where the rule of Christ is formulated, a multistep conversation aims to make the sinning person aware of the gospel and how it relates to the specific situation under the motto of "Forgive not seven times, but seventy times seven." Banning would be just a temporary breakup of the communication, used only in extreme cases. What is preached from the pulpit as gospel should not be mired in generalities, but should have bearing on the immediate needs of individuals and the congregation as a whole.

Therefore the rule of Christ is of great importance for what is talked about in point three of the Great Commission: "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Restated for today it could read: Don't let individuals be alone after baptism. Make sure they are being challenged as to their discipleship. Give them the opportunity to take over tasks corresponding to their gifts. Help them form the habit of caring about and hearing others. Don't talk about them behind their backs. Talk with them about their weak points person to person; let them feel your empathy. Let them know they are important to you. Take care that the congregation is a community where everyone is willing to care for each other. Remember that baptism therefore is at the same time also a reception into a congregation, since Christians need fellow believers to perfect their faith in relating to others.

Without such a congregation, a good beginning and honest repentance will be wasted. Without such confrontation, mission will be an immense uproar of the emotions, but after the storm dies down nothing really will have changed. The rule of Christ—the mutual, responsible communication of church members with each other in love and honesty—is foundational for faith. *Sine ecclesia nulla salus:* without a congregation of this sort there can be no salvation and no mission. That is the broader context from which we have to understand the Great Commission among the Swiss Brethren.

Apostolic Messengers

Now we move to the North, where Melchior Hoffman of Schwäbisch Hall in the summer of 1530 baptized 300 people in Emden and became the founder of Anabaptism in the Netherlands. In the same year he wrote his impressive paper, "The Ordinance of God" *(De Ordnonnantie Gods),* by which the Great Commission of Jesus is meant, which he exegeted point by point. An excerpt from the first part dealing with the verse, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," is

> *First the Lord Jesus Christ tells his apostles and disciples that from his heavenly father he has received all glory, power, strength, spirit, mind, and will and that through him he is made king and leader in heaven and on earth, and that he*

will have the power over everything that will ever have a name . . . .

Therefore is the son of man the savior for his people and the anointed savior of all believers, a reconciler, a mediator, and high priest, yes the mouth of the spiritual Moses and the heavenly Father. He sends forth his friends and servants to bring a bride home out of the storms of darkness and the power of Satan, out of the world and into the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as the king of kings excludes no one, nor does he condemn anyone, but commands his servants to go as his messengers and teach all people, heathen, tribes, languages, and nations as it was done in the times of the apostles. Christ has given himself for all people, for each human being, and has paid therefore for the sins of all, and has taken them away and destroyed them and established eternal salvation. And now, the time has come that the word of God should be proclaimed among all nations as a testimony . . . . That is the service of the true apostle, that he goes out from the covenant of the highest God—to teach all nations and proclaim the good news unto them and to bring the greeting of peace from the mouth of the groom that is the holy gospel of the crucified Christ, the word of eternal life, who has paid for all sins.

Even today we can feel the power and consciousness of mission in these words, but we understand that for Hoffman the main reason for mission was to be found in the authority God has given to Jesus Christ. The universal application of the commission, which is for all nations and excludes no one, is decisive and unmistakable. As Christ died for everyone, so the apostles are sent to everyone. One would wish for today's Christians to have just a part of this enthusiasm. Take, for example, Leenhart Bouwens, who, standing in Hoffman's tradition, baptized nearly 11,000 people within thirty years. We understand that in those days this enthusiasm caught fire and showed great results.

But if we would go on studying Hoffman's writings—the chapters on baptism, communion, discipleship, ban, true brotherhood—we would hear still other tones which would make us uneasy.

First there is Hoffman's view of humans and their salvation. Melchior Hoffman had started with the Lutheran belief in justification by the grace of God alone, without the works of the law. During his years as an Anabaptist, however, Hoffman developed a two-step system of salvation. One reaches the first step through faith and baptism with water. Thus the way of being a Christian is just opened. Now justification depends on the good conduct of the individual. This in turn is possible only with the special gift of the Holy Spirit, which means that baptism with the Spirit completes the baptism with water. Whoever reaches that level sins no more, and whoever continues to sin and does so on purpose, can never be saved again, but will be condemned by God. This view of people and their salvation sets them on a path of fear and uncertainty, full of desperate effort and hidden failure. Besides those are the supposedly perfect people, without failure, godlike. We have the story of Obbe Philips who baptized Menno Simons, which describes how much fear, on the one hand, and presumptuousness, on the other, was spreading—influenced by Hoffman throughout the Anabaptist movement.

Along with that goes the second main thought, the one on the office within this movement. Here too Hoffman started with a concept of church which tried to put the Lutheran principle of priesthood of all believers into practice, where each member of the congregation is a fully qualified member and participated in choosing a pastor or congregational leader and in judging what is right teaching. One could say that Hoffman as a Lutheran had the Anabaptist view of the church. When he became an Anabaptist he was representing a view which seems to be un-Anabaptist but which still has great influence in northern Germany. If not all Christians have received the Holy Spirit, then not all baptized members stand on the same spiritual level.

Hoffman distinguished between different offices which were controlled by apostolic messengers, sent by God, who were thought of as sinless and with absolute power over the congregations. Therefore these congregations had no power in and of themselves. Everything was up to the apostolic messenger. That was part of the nonevangelical view of humanity. One must naturally discriminate between believers if it is important who has received the gift of the Spirit after baptism and is infallible as a result. One must conclude that the congregation in this case has a totally different function than that of the congregation of the Swiss Brethren.

While the theology of the Swiss Brethren allowed the congregation to be a support and encouragement to those considering baptism (because of the fellowship of the brothers and sisters), it was different in North Germany. There the congregation was just the sum of those called out from the world as saints, and the congregation had just one function—to keep itself pure and dismiss those who did not live up to this demand. Many aspects of Mennonite history can be explained because of this; Menno Simons was heavily influenced by this theology. Even today the hesitation of certain congregations to say anything critical towards their chosen preachers or elders is a consequence of that theology.

The Great Commission: The gospel needs it.

Thus, a single Anabaptist understanding of the Great Commission of Jesus does not exist. The Great Commission is of central importance in all the groups, but we have to watch carefully what significance it has taken in the broader framework of a specific theology. Then, as now, we come across important differences. We observe, for instance, that the Great Commission is advocated with great enthusiasm, that a lot is brought into action and stirred up, but that at the same time the gospel is passed by. Good news is not proclaimed, but fear and oppression—which eventually lead to spiritual and emotional rigidity—are.

This does not answer all the questions raised at the beginning. Much remains to be done in order to put into practice that which has been accepted in principle. But these reflections should give us the courage to make distinctions, to question whether that which we proclaim is really the gospel, for the gospel alone requires this missionary imperative.

Heinold Fast, Emden, West Germany, delivered this address at the 1980 fall meeting of the Conference of South Germany Mennonite Congregations held at the Bibelheim Thomashof near Karlsruhe, Germany. The Mennonite Historical Association (Mennonitische Geschichtsverein) *members meeting took place in conjunction with the conference. The conference executive assigned the topic which, the author says, "asks a question with apparently great significance for our congregations." The conference, he suggests, "is hoping for help in answering this question by looking at the beginnings of our community of faith." The article is reprinted with the author's permission from* Mennonitisches Jahrbuch 1982. *It was translated by Ruth Raab, Ralph Wischnewski, and John Bender.*

Insights into Money Matters from the Epistles of Paul

PAUL M. ZEHR

Paul, the great missionary statesman and New Testament writer, reached both the economically poor and rich in his missionary endeavors. In Romans 16:23 Erastus, the city treasurer of Corinth, is mentioned as one of his converts. In Acts 17:34 Dionysius the Areopagite, perhaps one of the Greek philosophers, became a Christian and later is said to have become the bishop of the church at Athens. In Titus 3:13, Zenas, the lawyer, is mentioned. These illustrations indicate Paul reached leading persons in society in areas of finance, law, and philosophy.

Paul's theology actually developed along with his work among the emerging churches. In his earliest writings, Paul dealt with questions related to eschatology. Next, he wrote epistles that clarify the doctrine of salvation. During his first imprisonment Paul concentrated on the person and work of Christ and the importance of the church. Finally, in the pastoral epistles Paul dealt with practical matters related to the church. However, when we look at the totality of Paul's theology we discover an underlying Christ-centered theme that permeates the whole of his theological thinking.

In regard to ethics, in which stewardship and money have a part, a central Pauline foundation for ethical thinking is often missed in the Christian church. Paul does not build his ethics on the concept of withdrawal from society expressed in the ascetic movement in early church history and later in the monastic movement during the medieval period. Quite surprisingly, Paul does not even build his ethics on the Old Testament concept of covenant and election with the accompanying idea—reflected in the Psalms—that the righteous prosper. Instead, Paul's foundation for ethics is the person, teachings, and work of Christ. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Elsewhere Paul builds on the teachings of Jesus (Rom. 12-15; 1 Thess. 5; 1 Cor. 9:21), the life of Jesus, the death and resurrection of Jesus, and what it means now to be a new creature in Christ. Perhaps Paul's ethical stance is best summed up in Romans 8:29: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."

How then does Paul apply this ethical stance to Christian stewardship and money matters? One key verse is 2 Corinthians 8:9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

Servanthood and redemption

Paul viewed himself and other Christians as **servants of God.** A Christian steward is a servant, one under the authority of a master. Being a servant means Paul was a minister of the gospel according to God's gift of grace (Eph. 3:7). In 1 Corinthians 4:1, Paul brings the words minister or servant and steward together. The term steward as used here means a household servant who is entrusted by the owner with the management of his affairs. Somehow God has entrusted the affairs of his household to us.

But we are servant stewards. No matter how important the trust, how great the cause, the amount of things he has entrusted to us, we must always remember we are not lord, but servants of our one Lord Jesus Christ. A servant—lest he or she ceases being a servant—never takes the place of the master. Paul never expected to rise above the servant role, but always saw himself living in obedience to Christ as Lord. Not until we discover the concept of servanthood can we experience meaningful stewardship.

In addition to servanthood, Paul identifies the concept of **grace.** Much of Protestant Christianity in the West has emphasized an ethic of gratitude: Because God has blessed me in many ways I ought to be grateful to him in my response. An ethic of gratitude hardly goes far enough because it is not much different from a humanitarian philanthropist who is grateful for his good business. Both the Protestant ethical view of gratitude and the humanitarian view are inadequate because they are based on a natural theology. We are not stewards because we recognize God as Creator.

The real basis of Christian stewardship is redemption rather than creation. Paul's stewardship emphasis is based on grace. We are "bought with a price," have received "God's mercies," and have experienced "God's unspeakable gift." As John Drescher has said,

> *Thus in the epistles we are not merely beings of creation but we are servants of Christ, sons of God, ambassadors of Christ. We are those who responded to the good news of God's grace in Christ and peacemakers as ministers of grace. We are constrained by the love of Christ, his love for us and our love for Him. It is the obligation of love, not the obligation of law. For to make men true stewards, there must be a growing appreciation of God's grace in Christ . . . to base our appeal on wealth, time, or any other factor is to fall short. But get persons to understand the grace of God in their own lives and help them find out what the gospel can do for them and they cannot help but become more faithful stewards of the gospel themselves. Thus we say that the basis of faithful stewardship is a right relationship with God and the grace of God as we have found it in Christ. We are stewards not only because God made us and all we* ***have*** *is his, but also because he redeemed us and all we* ***are*** *he deserves* (Drescher, 1965: 4).

Therefore, Paul's teaching on stewardship and money is deeply embedded in his concepts of servanthood and grace. As servants we owe allegiance to Christ. As recipients of his grace not only all we have but all we are comes from his work of grace in our lives.

Stewardship of the gospel

Surprisingly, Paul does not talk about money, time, and talents as the main object of our stewardship. Instead his primary concern is the stewardship of the gospel. The Epistles indicate we are entrusted with the gospel (Eph. 3:7; 1 Cor. 9:16, 17), we are stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1), we are given the stewardship of the grace of God (Eph. 3:2), we are to make fully known the Word of God . . . the mystery hidden for ages (Col. 1:25-26), and we are ministers of the covenant (2 Cor. 3:6).

This larger entrustment of the gospel to the church engulfs all of our energies: our minds, our words, our deeds, our money, our local congregations, our educational institutions, our publishing efforts, our mutual aid efforts, and our mission work.

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Paul places this emphasis in a wider circle when he talks about the gifts Christ give to the church (1 Cor. 12, 14; Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:7-16). All of these gifts are gifts of Christ given to the church as expressions of his victory and grace. Some of the gifts are official office gifts, others are non-office gifts. Both the office and the non-office gifts are to work in harmony with the larger purpose of building up the body of Christ to attain the full stature of Christ and to give one's self in mission and service in the world. Perhaps the list of gifts is representative, not exhaustive. Today Paul might well add business people and money-makers as a gift of God given to the church. In fact, in Romans 12:8 Paul says of one gift, "He who contributes, in liberality."

Many of these gifts complement each other. For example, the gift of knowledge is accompanied by the gift of wisdom. The gift of evangelism is complemented by the gift of teachers. Perhaps the gift of making money, assuming it is done according to Christian ethical guidelines, is actually God's gift to the church. In fact, that may well be the basis upon which Paul emphasizes pastoral support in his epistles. Here the gift of making money and the gift of preaching or teaching complement each other in fulfilling the larger task of the stewardship of the gospel. Rather than criticizing money-makers, Paul would likely affirm them, not, however, to do as they please with their money, but to exercise this gift in harmony with the total gifts in the church for the building up of the body of Christ.

As the money-maker contributes liberally to the church and as the church administrator handles that money or the local congregation supports its pastor with that money, the gifts work together in ways that complement each other and make for the building up of the church. This larger view of gifts keeps us from separating the church from the teaching profession, separating the church from the business community, or separating the church from the medical profession. We all are the church exercising our gifts, and as the gifts function together in harmony we all practice the stewardship of the gospel.

Money and its use in Paul's epistles

Warning about greediness

Paul warns against the lure of greediness regarding money. In 1 Timothy 6:6-10 Paul reminds us that godliness with contentment is great gain. He says we brought nothing into the world and we will take nothing out of the world. Having food and clothing, we should be content. Perhaps Paul is building on the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 6:25-33 where Jesus emphasized contentment. Money has a way of creating anxiety if we are not careful. Paul talks about the temptations of those desiring to be rich. A subtle form of greed soon makes money the master rather than the servant. Paul says this craving for money has actually led some away from the faith, and he therefore concludes, "The love of money is the root of all evil." In 1 Timothy 6:17 Paul says the rich are to be exhorted not to be haughty, not to set their hope on certain riches, but on God. They are to be rich in good deeds, generous and liberal, for in so doing they lay hold of the true life. Elsewhere (2 Tim. 2:3) Paul says one of the marks of the last days is that people will be lovers of money. In fact, one qualification for a bishop is "no lover of money" (1 Tim. 3:3) and a qualification for a deacon is "not be greedy for gain" (1 Tim. 3:8; Tit. 1:7).

Sometimes Christians with wealth use money as a weapon. Instead of acting within the concept of gifts complementing each other, there is a temptation, at times, to wield one's power by how and where he or she gives money to the church. This too can be identified as the wrong use of money because no longer is Jesus Lord and no longer are the gifts functioning in harmony with one another in the context of the church.

Gratefulness for financial gifts

In Philippians 4:10-20 Paul states he has learned personally the spirit of contentment. He has learned to face plenty and to face hunger and want. In the midst of this, Paul expressed deep appreciation of Christians at Philippi for their gifts to him. He says, "No church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving except you only; for even in Thessalonica you sent me help once and again" (Phil. 4:15-16).

Perhaps the greater emphasis, however, is on the effect giving has on the giver. Underneath Paul's words, as F. W. Beare says, "Is the profound conviction that the exercise of generosity enlarges the spirit and opens it to receive a divine blessing that must far exceed the gift, in accordance with the wealth of the divine giver" (Beare, 1973:155). Here Paul ties into Jesus' teaching, "Give, and it will be given to you" (Lk. 6:37), not necessarily in receiving more money, but surely in receiving spiritual blessings.

God loves a cheerful giver

In 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 Paul applies the agricultural law of sowing and reaping. A person who sows sparingly will reap sparingly, and one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Giving money should not be a sad or compulsory experience. It ought to be a joyful, cheerful experience. Why? Because God responds to our giving by pouring out his blessing upon us. In 2 Corinthians 9:10 Paul says God "will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness." Giving generously produces much thanksgiving to God. So not only does the one who receives the offering experience spiritual blessing, but the one who shares in the offering likewise receives spiritual blessing. That's why Paul says, "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Financial support for church workers

In 1 Corinthians 9 Paul builds on an Old Testament passage taken from Deuteronomy 25:4 reflecting agriculture and animal life: "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain" (1 Cor. 9:9). Paul further illustrates the point by referring to the soldier who receives wages, the vineyard owner who receives the fruit from the vineyard, and the flock owner who receives milk from the flock. Paul builds his case by a series of rhetorical questions climaxing in 1 Corinthians 9:11: "If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits?" Paul is essentially defending his apostleship in this chapter. He identifies the right to take a wife or sister with him in his missionary travels, the right to food and drink, and the right not to do manual labor for a living. But Paul goes on to say he does not demand these things even though he has a right to them in the Christian church. Though it is clear from the temple service and the Lord's command that "those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel," Paul says in verse 15, "But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing this to secure any such provision."

In 1 Timothy 5:17-18 Paul goes further. He not only quotes the same Old Testament passage but says, "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching." For Paul, the importance of being a steward of the gospel was so great that those involved in the preaching and teaching ministry of the church received twice as much financial support as others.

Bearing one another's burdens

In Galatians 6:2, 7-10, Paul says the Christian community

has a responsibility toward a member who is carrying an overload. The concept of mutual aid was alive in the early church through deacons and deaconesses. In verses 7-10 Paul again builds on the concept of sowing and reaping. He concludes, "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." Most scholars agree that Paul is talking about money in this passage.

Giving systematically

In 1 Corinthians 16:1 Paul speaks directly concerning the contributions for the saints. Apparently, giving money for the work of the church was a normal practice in the early church, including the weak church at Corinth.

Paul instructs the Corinthian believers to lay aside some money each week for the Lord. A regular systematic plan of giving is emphasized. Each is to give as he or she has prospered, meaning, those making more money give more. While each gives in proportion to what each earns, all are to give systematically. In so doing, people will not fall prey to high emotional appeals but will give as saints of God on a regular systematic basis.

Called to be faithful

We may summarize insights into money matters from Paul's epistles as follows.

1. We must view money matters from the stance of how the early church based its ethical teaching directly on Christ. Paul's teaching on money does not go against Jesus' teaching; it merely expands what we have in the Gospels.

2. We must view money from the larger context of Christian stewardship, taking into account the servanthood role of Christians and that all Christians are accountable for the stewardship of the gospel.

3. Our view of money arises from the context of grace and redemption. We give money not because we are lucky or have a successful business nor because the church asks for it. We give because Christ has made us new creatures and our life belongs to him.

4. The ability to make and give money ought to be viewed as a gift in the church working in harmony with other gifts in the mutual effort to be stewards of the gospel.

5. A wrong attitude toward money can have devastating effects on one's spiritual life. Envy, jealousy, worry, and the love of money in an affluent society can soon create a demonic effect. We are exhorted to be content with what God gives us.

6. Paul emphasizes the joy of giving money to the church. It brings joy to those laboring in the gospel and joy to those who give. God gives spiritual blessings to those who give generously to the Lord's work.

7. Paul not only suggests but strongly encourages financial support for the church worker. Those laboring in preaching and teaching are worthy of double honor.

8. Paul urges financial support for those carrying an overload.

9. Paul encourages regular systematic giving.

10. Paul's model is Jesus. "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich."

Finally, we must remember God has not called us to become successful. He has, however, called us to be faithful.

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"I'd pray for more fire in my bones"

Reflections of a Bead Stringer

DON RATZLAFF AND VERNON WIEBE

When he completed his commission as general secretary in September 1982, Vernon Wiebe had guided the tiller of Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services for nearly fifteen years. He came to the job in 1968 with a background in college teaching, coaching, and administration, and in church planting, but most of all with a desire "to present myself in service to Him." He inherited a mission that was overstaffed and in debt and, unknown at the time, facing a future of increasing scrutiny and challenge as many emerging nations began to question the role of the North American evangelical missionary. In an interview with Don Ratzlaff, managing editor of Christian Leader, *Wiebe reflected on his years of service, the changes and challenges, the rewards and frustrations, the achievements and disappointments of his calling.*

How has doing missions changed during the years you've served as general secretary?

One of the significant changes that has occurred worldwide, and has affected us too, is church-mission relationships. The past decade and a half has been rather stormy for overseas missions. When I came in there was a strong voice that missionaries should go home. My position was, yes, **bad** missionaries should go home, but there will always be room for the good missionary. The good missionary is one who reproduces—that is, gets a mature church on its feet and is no longer the pioneer or the parent, but a **partner** with the church.

How have Mennonite Brethren fared in that area?

I believe the record will show that during the past decade and a half Mennonite Brethren have done well in establishing partner relationships. Part of that goes back to our decision in 1969 to turn administration and properties we were holding into the hands of the national churches. Having done that, our relationships have improved very, very much with national leaders. I think a fair evaluation would be that in some places we held on too long; we were parents too long. We also have to say that in some places we became partners too soon. This speaks to our human frailty.

What effect did this turning over of more control to national churches have on missionaries?

We must recognize that during this transition some well-meaning missionaries felt betrayed. Some sensed resignation and frustration. I would not want to lay that at the feet of the missionaries, but at all our feet. First, we tell them to get going and take some initiative, then we turn around and tell them not to take too much initiative, to be a good servant and do as they're told. That, I feel, is the real crunch for a missionary today—to live up to the high expectations of the sending church, to take the spiritual initiative, yet at the same time to look like one of the servants and not to be bossy and dominant.

What have been some of the greatest achievements during the past fifteen years?

One of the best things is that we have in some measure returned the ownership of the mission to the churches. We have emphasized that it's the work of the church, and that all members have a right to all the information and to give us counsel. We've tried to visit all the churches regularly, and we go to all the district and national conferences. I think, generally, there is confidence and goodwill among the churches concerning the Board of Missions and Services. I feel good about that.

Another thing we have done is freed the missionary for work. We have standardized procedures so that one doesn't have to guess at them. These are small, secondary things, but they're settled and we don't have to keep making new decisions. For example, we have made arrangements so that missionaries are responsible for their own things and we don't have to have committee meetings to figure out furniture, housing, and the like.

We've also been leaders in evangelical circles in missionary remuneration. Though our missionaries work in a variety of places, they get the same buying power as pastors—in the middle range. We've been lauded not only for adopting this pattern but also for applying it so directly. We've been pioneers.

Another thing is that we have worked on our financial accountability so that the way in which we form our budget, do our accounting, and spend our money is well regulated. That has also freed us to do our work.

If I'd like to be known for anything, it would be for returning the ownership of the mission to the churches, developing a strong partnership with the churches abroad, freeing the missionaries to do their work, and getting our finances in order.

What about progress in the area of workers?

I'm pleased that we have been growing again in missionary numbers and that I was part of a conscious design that we would grow by five missionaries every year for the next three years. We've budgeted for that.

What about new areas of outreach?

Some people would say there's no credit at all in having gone into new countries; they would fault us for spreading ourselves too thin. But during my term we have entered Spain, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Botswana (to work with the African Independent Churches). I have been part of those negotiations and feel good about it. Some persons within the mission, whom I really respect, say we are playing a numbers game, that we'd do much better to put more people in the countries we're already in, that sending people to other countries is a public-relations gimmick to keep the troops fired up at home.

We should not claim to be pure on this. I'm sure that is part of the motivation. But new countries have opened up to us for one reason or another. Maybe Mennonite Central Committee was there, or we had other connections. We don't have a closely reasoned set of guidelines with which we look at the world. We have to be in the right place at the right time and have the right resources. We test it to see if it's possible; if it is, we go in.

These are all positive things. Are there some things that have not happened that you wish had, or things that have happened that you wish hadn't?

I'm an eternal optimist; I see a cup as being half full rather than half empty. I wish I could have worked with greater intensity and greater fire. I'm trying to examine in my own heart whether I have been too laid back and too loving; whether I should have pounded my fist more frequently at workers' retreats; whether I should have asked a bit more urgently when I traveled what the workers and leaders needed so we could thrust harder in doing the things we came to do—tell the good news, form the church, help people in need. If I were doing it again, I'd pray for more fire in my bones.

I have been a follower of the board, and maybe that has been a shortcoming. That is part of the "fire in leadership" that could have been exerted. I'm a radar-type person—I tend to get my signals from others, perhaps more than I should. I've tried to lead, but I think my leadership was not as aggressive, as bold, as forthright as it could have been.

What about programming priorities?

This is no reflection on the fine missionaries we do have, but I believe that when the church is called to send out workers, it should give up some of its top leaders. We've gotten a few leaders, but we really should have called at least a dozen more. Paul and Barnabas, I think, must have been the top leaders of the Antioch church. Yet they were sent.

Another thing we need to be prophetic about is that we're becoming very comfortable about staying at home. We're not finding people who are ready to serve for longer terms. We need some people who are willing to learn a new language and culture, and to apply themselves for ten or twenty years at least.

What, then, do you see to be Missions/Services' biggest challenges in the years ahead?

One is to export some of our best who will give themselves to longer periods of believers' church planting overseas. We also need to work on an increase in joyful giving. God has made us affluent, free, and with resources for a purpose. Nowhere do others have the body of knowledge we have. Nobody on earth has the money we have. No one has the freedom to put that money and know-how together that we have. Yet the bid is so strong to stay close to our grandchildren and children and not to have to put up with the inconvenience of becoming like a child again, to learn all over again a new culture.

Another frontier in missions is to discern gifts and to call out those gifted people immediately. We have to look within our ranks right now for spiritual people who are competent in their profession and have the missionary gift of being able to adapt easily to other people and other cultures. It really isn't the biblical pattern to use the shotgun approach to recruitment—to make a random call, hoping that you'll hit a few impressionable young people in the congregation. The better approach is the rifle approach—to go for the people you really need. That is beginning to happen.

Now that you have been at it for a decade and a half, how would you define the role of the general secretary?

My responsibility is to be a bead stringer. If you have a box of beads, you don't have anything. If you get them on a string, you have a necklace. The reason it becomes something beauti-

ful is that when you get them strung, everyone knows where they belong and that they're part of the whole. So that's been one of my responsibilities, to be a fashioner of the whole, a coordinator.

Another responsibility, and maybe it's a part of bead-stringing, is to interpret missions to the sending churches. We've tried hard behind the scenes to have a good program, but after you have a good program you also have to tell it well. We've worked hard at that.

Besides being a coordinator and a promoter, another area of responsibility might be called research and development—looking ahead to the things we ought to be doing and the places we ought to be going.

How has the job changed you as a person?

Is it going from forty to fifty-five that's changed me, or is it the work that has changed me? I was always interested in missions and church planting. I think now, though, that I see a larger arena in which to work. Yet I also have to admit that I'm moving back again. I'm going to support overseas missions heartily, but I also see North American Mennonite Brethren as having a new agenda of evangelism and church planting at home. I've committed the rest of my years to be in the middle of evangelism and church planting in one way or another.

What do you think the "Vernon Wiebe imprint" has been?

I think it's my big feet. So many pastors have enjoyed introducing me as a man with the big feet, and I enjoy that too. Actually, that is a question other people should judge. But I think in the past fifteen years missions has had a good and understanding role in all of our churches. I think history will show that these past fifteen years have been fairly tough years, but that we've weathered them well and have grown in quality, though maybe not quantity. I think we've taken the halo off missions, which is good; we've brought some realism to the work.

Maybe one of the contributions I've made is that since I was not highly trained in theology and missiology, I've worked in the vernacular, the language of the people. It seems to me that has been appreciated. Maybe my imprint has been that we've kept the work in the vernacular; people have understood it and have rallied around it. There's been an openness to challenge the things they don't like and to talk together about them.

In review

Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II. By Walter Sawatsky. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1981, 560 pp., $19.95 ($14.95 pb)

Reviewed by George K. Epp

Walter Sawatsky is one of the few Mennonite scholars who have a working knowledge in Russian to do serious research in Russian history. He has traveled extensively in the USSR, and three years at the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism, Keston College, Kent, England, have contributed to his insights. With this background, it is not surprising that Sawatsky would present us with the most significant recent publication on the church in the Soviet Union, *Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II.*

While Sawatsky deals mainly with the Evangelicals in the USSR, he does not suspend this group somewhere in midair. Useful observations on the Orthodox Church in Russia present the proper setting for the story of the Evangelicals. The so-common blind spots of scholars who know Russia from a tourist perspective are missing in this book. Sawatsky gives the reader an opportunity to see the complexity of church life in a society where the church is seen as a cancer which exists only because known antibiotics have proved to be ineffective. Under such circumstances, the timid and fearful do not find their way into the church, and therefore it becomes clear why the Evangelicals in Russia come across as a much more committed and in many respects more aggressive group.

At the same time we are also puzzled by incredible compromises made with the state. Understanding full well the government's professed aim of destruction of the church, some leaders of this church opt for cooperation with their atheistic oppressors to "save" the church. The history of that church is full of paradoxes, but it has survived as a vital force in the USSR.

Sawatsky also points out that the leadership which has opted for cooperation is not challenged by those who have suffered imprisonment for their faith. The more daring wing in the church also finds support among the younger members of the church. The author does not create heroes, nor does he offer moral judgment. He actually succeeds in mellowing the reader's judgment, because of insights gained through the author's objective analysis of a situation which is so totally foreign to the Western reader.

Sawatsky's insights into the tensions in the Evangelical camp in the USSR are significant. Some of the outstanding leaders such as Kriuchkov, Baturin, and Vins have consistently refused to accept any state interference in the church and have challenged the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists (AUCECB) leadership to stop their subservience to an atheistic state. Sawatsky treats with compassion and impartiality the split which resulted from this challenge, and at this time it is the best analysis of this development by a Western scholar.

Sawatsky's book is the most up-to-date in information, insights, and bibliographies on the Evangelical movement in the Soviet Union. Even best informed scholars will appreciate this excellent contribution.

George K. Epp is President and Professor of Russian History at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The New China. By Winifred Nelson Beechy. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1982, 272 pp., $6.95 (pb)

Reviewed by J. Winfield Fretz

People who want an interesting account of modern life in New China will find Winifred Beechy's book highly rewarding. The author and her husband served as faculty advisers of the first group of Goshen (Indiana) College exchange students to spend several months in 1980 in the interior of one of the most fascinating countries and cultures of the world. It is a warmly human introduction to a land and a people little known and understood by Westerners. This is due in part to the limited news and reliable information from China for most of the past thirty years.

Alluring chapter titles such as "Life in the Panda Palace," "Whatever Happened to the Middle Kingdom?" and "Green Bough of Hope" reflect the human interest topics discussed in the book. The reader is introduced to significant historical information, customs, and traditions; above all, one gets a glimpse into the social institutions of the New China. The author gives the reader the privilege of seeing family life, the school room, the marketplace,

and the community life in modern China. Winifred Beechy's observations and insights give answers to many questions the reader would logically raise about this fascinating country with its billion people.

The subjects of religion and government are not overlooked. Readers who have read only what appears in the secular press may be surprised to learn of the real interest in Christianity despite the government's official atheistic position. The Christian religion has a bright future in China. Christians will have little difficulty adopting the national motto of China: "Serve the People" (although from different motives). I heartily recommend *The New China* for a quick, general overview of this ancient country thirty years after its political and social revolution.

J. Winfield Fretz is Acting President of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. He has made three trips to China.

TEE in Japan: A Realistic Vision: The Feasibility of Theological Education by Extension for Churches in Japan. By W. Frederic Sprunger. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1981, 472 pp., $15.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Ruth Wiens

This book is not a history of TEE in Japan but rather an in-depth study of and plea for the feasibility of theological education by extension for churches in Japan. It gives an introduction to the work of Mennonites in Japan and their various encounters with the possibility of a leadership training program because this need accompanies their program of pioneer evangelism and church building. However, nothing was undertaken because of the lack of unity concerning such training both in the mission and with the Japan conference leaders, and the lack of responsible leadership and necessary resources.

This book also combines church growth theory with the Anabaptist vision of the church in proposing a favorable rationale for theological education by extension. The author is not pleading for training of the laity but for training of members among the lay people who may have gifts of leadership for the ministry of the church. A program of this nature requires a recognized base of theological training to give it proper recognition and to relate it to needs peculiar to Japan.

Since small beginnings have been made with various training programs in several areas of Japan, and since to some degree they have accomplished their purpose, the Mennonite General Conference could also make a beginning in developing such a training program. It will call for sacrificial leadership. But although the churches in Japan are small, they have a high leadership quality, due to the success of its promotional program.

Ruth Wiens is a missionary with the Mennonite Brethren mission in Japan.

Mama Nlundi—Our Adopted Mother. By Anna Rose Goertzen. New York: Vantage Press, 1982, 155 pp., $8.95

Reviewed by Eudene Keidel

The appendix of this book has a letter written by a mission administrator to Miss Goertzen which says, "The history of World Missions would be a very different story today had the dedicated and often unsung service of single missionaries not been part of the overseas outreach of the Christian Church."

Mama Nlundi—Our Adopted Mother is an autobiographical story of Anna Goertzen's pilgrimage through a life of mission service. In 1938 she went to an area in Zaire, West Africa (formerly the Belgian Congo) which prior to that time had no Christian witness. The American Mennonite Brethren Mission later worked in that area.

Goertzen tells how God called and led her through difficult and happy times in Zaire. She endured much for the cause of Christ. We need more people like her. Her dedication to the task should be a challenge to anyone who reads this book.

This is a good story for young people and adults. It shows that those whom God calls, he also walks beside. Sometimes he led Anna in unorthodox yet real and personal ways.

To friends and family who prayed for Anna during the many years she was in Zaire, this book has great significance. To the broader readership it will have less interest because of the absence of an underlying theme which would give it more cohesion.

Eudene Keidel, Fort Wayne, Indiana, has served since 1951 in Zaire with Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas.

Nationalism: Case and Crisis in Missions. German Missions in British India, 1939-1946. By Paul H. von Tucher. Erlangen, Germany: Selbstverlag (published privately), 1980, 698 pp. (pb)

Reviewed by Peter Penner

To affirm that this is an extremely important book is not to assume that it will be widely read. It is a case study of the explosive and divisive force of patriotic and ideological nationalism in wartime. German missionaries in British India were treated as enemy aliens (as in World War I) because they were Germans; worse, some were suspected of being Nazi sympathizers. They were cut off from other missionaries and fellow countryfolk in India, many of whom were Nazi (and also interned), as well as from Christian nationals in India who took the opportunity to demand a rapid decolonization of the Indian church under German pupilage.

The fundamental question raised is this: Why could the international community of Christians represented in missionary councils, national and international, not bridge the gap created by the war so as to protect the German missionaries from complete disruption of their work and from the utterly humiliating treatment in one detention camp after another, not to mention the last and worst, in 1947, upon arrival back in Germany?

Despite some instances of undoubted heroism toward these "orphaned missions," the national barriers and suspicions created a "crisis of faith towards one's Christian brother or toward one's colleague" (p. 507). At Tambaran, South India, in November 1938, at the third world conference of the International Missionary Council, Christians from over seventy countries pledged that their commitment to missions would indeed rise above the nation-state, patriotism, and nationalism (pp. 44ff.). All of this was washed away on the tide of wartime fears stemming from the attempted Nazi manipulation of German missionary societies in India and the potential political collusion between Nazis and Indian nationalists, such as the followers of S. B. Bose.

This book by the Quaker Tucher stands as a warning that nationalism and war can destroy the work of decades. It dashes the hopes that a supranational church will ever be possible, except in conference resolutions. The snares of nationalism—placing country and cause above Christian commitment—are great. The problem can be seen in the case of the famous Basel Mission. While Swiss in origin, it depended on Germany for much of its funding and personnel. During the war, based on its World War I experience, it decided to na-

tionalize, becoming wholly Swiss in financing and personnel in order to keep its property in India and to continue unbroken its work in India (p. 214). This could not be done without considerable pain.

The break with the Tambaran spirit can also be seen in the change which came over the National Christian Council (NCC) in India. Whereas V. S. Azariah visited German missionaries during their internment at Ahmadnagar, his successor as secretary, Rajah Manikam, a Tamil Lutheran, decided to give the "freedom movement" against the British a full religious voice. The church in India in 1947 was to be as Indian as the navy and fleet would henceforth be (p. 459). The war caught the societies unprepared for rapid devolution of responsibility. The Christian missionary societies kept their churches in leading strings, in a state of pupilage, just as the government of India stood most uncompromising on the question of political devolution. In the case of the four German societies and their forty missionaries, self-reliance had been sharply induced only by the Nazi embargo on funds. Unless they were prepared to shape their ideologies according to direction from Berlin, they would require funds from other sources. As it turned out, their entire work was lost to them.

Though the story of this crisis should receive the widest possible attention, Tucher's book suffers from what might be called dissertationitis, as well as from a translation whose English is frequently idiomatically German. More critical is the failure to provide an adequate introduction to the crucial problem which first influenced Tucher to undertake the research as a doctoral thesis for Erlangen University. One has to go to chapter seven or the conclusion in order to get a definition of the problem. The book is also long—517 pages of text stuffed with more than 2,500 quotations, short and long. Also, one must at times read the quotations in order to get the story line. With 181 pages of supplementary material, there is no index, though the table of contents does help the reader into the text.

This is, however, an indispensable work of reference for mission boards and those who believe that Christian discipleship should be able to rise above ideology and war. The book teaches a hard lesson about the breakdown of Christian discipleship in time of war when brother turns against brother, or at least will not lay down his life for the other or put his job on the line.

Peter Penner is Associate Professor of History at Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick.

Doing Theology Across Cultures. By Morris A. Inch. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982, 104 pp., $5.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Marlin Jeschke

This slim volume addresses the recently popular subject of contextualization of the gospel in the Christian world mission. After noting the responsibility of Christians to respect revelation as well as culture, Morris Inch glances at three dimensions of the subject.

First, he reviews the Apostle Paul's attempt to plant a Jewish gospel in the Gentile world, especially as pertaining to the problem of food offered to idols (1 Corinthians). Second, he critiques (and finds inadequate) several proposals put forward in modern times on how Christianity might assimilate the Chinese Yin-Yang theme, a Buddhist doctrine of human nature, and the notion of salvation in Liberation Theology. Third, he comments favorably on two contemporary enterprises: bringing the gospel with minimum trauma into an East Indian Muslim culture, and preserving Confucian filial piety among Christian converts in Taiwan.

Historical case studies are missing in this book. Inch should have moved from the Apostle Paul to the history of the Christian world mission, noting both good and bad (and mixed!) examples of contextualization of the gospel. **Then** he could usefully—and with a little more credibility and authority—opine on contemporary situations. As it is, Professor Inch's book, while setting forth unobjectionable conclusions, is really too superficial. Readers will do well to go to his footnotes and bibliography for leads into the more extended case studies.

It is gratifying, nonetheless, to see work going forward in the American evangelical world on the problem of contextualization of the gospel, though we should realize how few American evangelicals would share Inch's openness to this problem. It is gratifying because we might yet discover how Hellenized, Westernized, and Americanized **our** Christianity is, enabling us to reexamine and critique the contextualization of Christianity in the West. We may then be better qualified to work at the tasks of contextualization elsewhere.

Marlin Jeschke chairs the Division of Bible, Religion, and Philosophy and teaches at Goshen (Indiana) College.

American Protestant Women in World Mission: A History of the First Feminist Movement in North America. By R. Pierce Beaver. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980, 218 pp., $7.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Anne Warkentin Dyck

At this stage in the history of feminist movements it is good to be made aware that the first of such movements was started by North American Protestant women dedicated to missions. What vision they had at a time when mission societies were composed exclusively of men! Mary Webb and the fourteen Baptist and Congregational women who, on October 9, 1800, organized the "Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes" could not have imagined the tremendous impact that act could have. Beaver, in his preface, says, "No other form of American intervention overseas has made a more powerful cultural impact than this work for women and children."

I am grateful that this was more than a powerful impact overseas. Important as that may be, it could not happen without also having a powerful impact on attitudes of North American men to women's involvement in world missions. In weaving us through these two aspects, the author has given us more than an ordinary history of that involvement.

The chapter "Integration and Sequel" presents some interesting insights which need further pondering. The author feels that the greatest loss consequent to the end of distinctive, organized women's world mission movement has been the decline of missionary dynamism and zeal in the churches. In light of this, the words of Mrs. F. H. Sheets in an address to the 1917 Foreign Missions Conference (read by her husband) sound prophetic: "Any adjustments which do not delegate to the women sufficient administrative initiative to nerve them to their greatest endeavor will be in danger of defeating the very ends for which they are made."

In this revision of his earlier *All Loves Excelling,* the author has added a chapter on the decade of the seventies. He makes some significant observations which we will need to look at seriously if the cause of missions is to advance. Beaver feels the general decline in the number of women in missions is due in part to preoccupation with women's rights in the churches. If women were accepted as equals in the church and on mission boards they would be free to devote more time and energy to missionary work.

For the serious history student the tedious mention of many dates and organizations will be valuable, but they will soon be forgotten by many of us. What we should not soon forget is

our indebtedness to these truly remarkable pioneer women and to R. Pierce Beaver for helping us remember.

Anne Warkentin Dyck is a homemaker and manager of a local Mennonite Central Committee thrift and gift shop in Swift Current, Saskatchewan. She served several terms as a nurse with MCC in Indonesia.

The Compassionate God. By C. S. Song. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1982, 277 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Gayle Gerber Koontz

In spite of (some might argue because of!) the fact that C. S. Song has studied philosophy and taught seminary-level systematic theology, *The Compassionate God* is a lively, easy-to-read theological essay.

Beginning with the image of a flat-nosed rather than a point-nosed Christ, Song proposes that the revelation of the meaning of history in Jesus Christ is not finished. God can and does work in ways that may take all of us by surprise. What does theology look like when transposed to Asia?

Song's analysis is that traditional theology often assumes that the totality of history is a projection of Judeo-Christian history. The first half of Song's book is devoted to biblical theology—interpretation of the Tower of Babel as a symbol not of pride but of fear of dispersion, of Daniel and Second Isaiah as witnesses to a God of all nations, of the cross as a symbol of God's struggle against the centralization of the saving power of love in one nation and one religion. His interpretations are often creative and controversial—thought provoking if not always logically compelling or clearly evident on the basis of the text themselves. His central point—that centrism tends to blind Christians to God's new work in history—is sound and of vital importance not only to Asian theology, but to Western theology as well.

Song believes that suffering is a truly common human experience. Traditions alienate the stranger. But in the suffering Christ there are no foreigners; it is one place "where all persons ... can recognize one another as fellow pilgrims in need of God's saving power."

Song breaks into Chinese territory in the second portion of the book. In his reflections on Confucianism and Buddhism, he loosely compares the Chinese sages to Old Testament prophets and uncovers echoes of Christ in the vow of the Mahayana Buddhist *bodhisattva*. Of special interest to Mennonites are the historical details and the analysis in the chapter on "The Tragedy of Taiping Christianity." Song examines why the Taiping Rebellion, whose leaders claimed that Christianity was the chief source of their political ideology, failed so tragically. He identifies the problem as the identification of God's healing love with the power and violence of a worldly kingdom. "There is no passage from the power of God's love to the power of the sword," he concludes. He also draws conclusions about missionary support of the movement and the failure of the Chinese themselves to see that Christianity does not imply sweeping exorcism of Chinese culture.

Song completes his book with a description of the endless suffering in Asia and a passionate plea for worldwide Christian response to that suffering. He spends one chapter on political suffering, formulating a strong statement that God's mission to the Chinese people as well as to Koreans and Taiwanese may well be the nourishment of fragile elements of democracy within their nations. "God's power frees and heals, but authoritarian power enslaves and imprisons," he writes. But his description of suffering includes the impact of the Vietnam War, genocide in Kampuchea, and specifically the Indochinese refugees. "This is the case God lays before the conscience of the nations," Song writes. One cannot but agree with Song that "we have no alternative but to move on with God toward that vision of a community of compassion and communion with love."

Gayle Gerber Koontz is Assistant Professor of Theology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

The Challenge of Liberation Theology: A First World Response. Edited by Brian Mahan and L. Dale Richesin. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1981, 147 pp., $7.95 (pb)

Reviewed by John H. Yoder

Most of this booklet reflects a lecture series organized by students at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. The phrase "First World Response" has three meanings:

1) Persons within the First World who represent minority perspectives (J. Cone, E. Schüssler Fiorenza) capsule well what they have said more fully before.

2) Persons at home within the First World liberal ecumenical academic Protestantism who affirm Liberation Theology and adjust it to their own "thing": L. Cormie to historic/philosophical developmentalism; J. Fowler to personal/psychological developmentalism; D. Sölle to the internal criticism of consumerism.

3) Critics, such as Gilkey, Ogden, and Lovin, whose critiques are directed to the above paper, say, "yes, but." These critics approve of the general bias of the theologians of liberation, but advise them to downplay the claim to have a whole new way of theology. In addition, two larger criticisms are unrelated to the Chicago conference, from perspectives within mainstream academic philosophical theology.

Christian thought in the First World ought to hear some of the challenges from Liberation Theology, but since on those matters the responders say "me too," it is not clear what those are. Robert M. Brown's *Theology in a New Key* presents these challenges more clearly. A number of counter challenges ought to be addressed to the Liberation Theologies, but they are not here. In neither challenge nor counter challenge direction is the dimension of mission or evangelism part of the picture. Nor do the debatable issues of social ethics become concrete.

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Book Brief

The Mennonite Work in Puerto Rico, 1941-81. By Justus G. Holsinger. Elkhart, Indiana: Mennonite Board of Missions, 1982, 59 pp., $1.50 (pb). This booklet in both Spanish and English surveys Mennonite witness in Puerto Rico, starting with the early contributions of Mennonite Central Committee workers during World War II. It traces efforts to provide creative service assignments in agriculture, health, nutrition, and education as well as church-planting efforts by Mennonite Board of Missions missionaries. Holsinger discusses developments during the last few years of the Mennonite Church in Puerto Rico in the final part of the essay. Holsinger himself was one of the pioneers of Mennonite witness in Puerto Rico, where he returned in 1969 for a short-term assignment and in 1979 for two years as director of curriculum development at Academia Menonita in Summit Hills in the San Juan metropolitan area. The booklet is valuable not only for its content, but also because it invites further exploration into the history, significance, and projections of Mennonite presence in a mission location by both missionary agencies and national churches.

—Daniel Schipani

Editorial

In its cover story for December 27, 1982, *Time* essayed "The New Missionary." The story would be noteworthy simply from the standpoint that the news media featured the missionary at all. That seldom happens. In his 1968 presidential address to the American Historical Association, John King Fairbank upbraided his colleagues for ignoring the missionary contribution to modern history. He described the missionary as the "invisible" figure of history.

It is interesting to note what a news magazine finds significant about today's missionary and to what extent stereotypes have shifted. *Time* reports there are now a total of 220,000 Christian missionaries worldwide. These divide between Roman Catholics (138,000) and Protestants (82,000). We are not given a breakdown by continent except that for the United States—32,000 Protestants and 6,000 Roman Catholics.

Although the article mentions that Third World Protestants now send out 15,000 missionaries of their own, we are given an unsatisfactory picture of the actual sending from that part of the world church. On the one hand, statistics alone are hardly reliable indicators. One cannot put much stock in many of these figures. On the other hand, we continue to receive convincing evidence of continued vitality and growth in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, whereas the situation in the West gives little ground for encouragement.

Time observes that today's missionary employs a wide variety of methods and approaches. But the *leitmotiv* running through the story is the bent toward the poor and disenfranchised of the world. "The new missionary typically works with the downtrodden and despised of societies in the far stretches" of the world.

Missionaries seem agreed on the big goal: their work should lead to the formation of an indigenous church. The impact of the social sciences over the past two generations becomes unmistakable in the way missionaries uniformly insist on unwrapping the Christian message from Western culture. "Instead of Christianizing Africa," it is observed, "missionaries should help to Africanize Christianity."

But if missionaries are united on the main goal and cultural relativity, they find themselves caught in continuing debate about what all is included in the missionary mandate. Does the commission encompass ministry to physical, social, and psychological needs along with the spiritual? What is the fate of those who never hear the Christian message? These, of course, are not new questions. They are remarkable primarily for their continued persistence.

It appears that the day of the missionary hero is not completely over. *Time* gives several touching examples of missionaries who are identifying with the marginal peoples of the world in self-giving ways that are possible only through special grace and courage. The inevitable collision between such a witness and the political realm comes through accurately. One is not left in doubt that the powerless are also the voiceless. Anyone who dares to be the voice for the underdog can expect repercussions, including martyrdom.

On the whole, the *Time* portrait is positive and fair-minded. What would one have wished to add? Certainly, we should give stronger emphasis to the universality of the church. Although this fact becomes increasingly true through the sheer force of numbers in many quarters of the globe, we continue to think in too narrow terms about that fact. This points to the insufficiency, the incompleteness, of any local church. We need to continue nurturing an attitude of healthy interdependence among Christ's people throughout the world.

—Wilbert R. Shenk

POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

June 1983
Volume 11 Number 2
MISSION FOCUS

On Trying to Do What One Has Taught

ROBERT L. RAMSEYER

What is the relationship between teaching about something and actually doing that something? Does what I am teaching make any sense when someone actually tries to put it in practice? This is a concern common to most teachers, and the anxiety in this regard may be particularly high among professors in theological seminaries. This was a major concern for me when my wife, Alice, and I undertook a church-planting assignment in Hiroshima, Japan, after I had spent six years in training people for mission in a North American seminary.

In teaching over the years I had become convinced that Philippians, chapter 2—incarnation and being a servant—is Christ's model for us in mission, and that Ephesians, chapter 2—the gospel of reconciliation—is a very important statement of the gospel which we share in mission. How would this work out in practice in Hiroshima?

Trying to do: missionary in Japan

Taking Jesus as our model, we wanted to go to Hiroshima in openness and vulnerability, divesting ourselves, insofar as we could, of the power which comes from education, secure finances, and social position. We wanted to listen—to listen to what the people of Hiroshima were saying about what they were looking for. We wanted to stand where they stood and see the world from their perspective. What would be good news for them? How should we share the news about Jesus Christ so that it could be received as good news?

We went to Hiroshima convinced that we should be willing to help people where they wanted to be helped, even if this did not seem to make much strategic sense. One such place was use of our linguistic skills, translating messages that Hiroshima wanted to share with the English-speaking world, from Japanese to English. We did interpreting at some public meetings and also did some English teaching. These were, of course, good ways of getting to know people, but more important, they were ways that we could help in a significant way.

In Hiroshima we tried to make ourselves available, being where people gathered. We wanted to find ways of making friends, of becoming genuine friends of people there. We went to coffee shops, athletic meetings, and peace gatherings instead of waiting for people to come to meetings that we announced. We tried to keep our schedules open and flexible, avoiding regular commitments that would have put us under pressure so that we would have been psychologically looking at the clock when people wanted to talk with us. We wanted people to be able to feel open and relaxed with us.

That also left us with the problem of finding useful and helpful things to do when people were not there to talk, useful and helpful things which could be easily laid aside without concern when people did come, things that could be picked up again easily when we had time.

Missions and church planting are ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit, not something that human beings accomplish. Therefore, whatever is done is done on God's timetable, not ours. This is easy to say and easy to teach in classrooms, but terribly difficult to live. Over and over again we had to remind ourselves, "Don't panic, don't push, don't try to manipulate people into the church." It is easy to take a salesperson as our model for mission instead of Jesus who refused to manipulate people into becoming his followers.

As servants we need to remember that our main concern is to help people come to know Jesus Christ and to commit themselves to him. We are not trying to increase attendance at meetings or get names on a register. We are in mission to help people, not to bring people in so that the things that we are trying to do will be successful. People are not ingredients for the successful accomplishment of our goals. They are the goal.

Bringing together a new family

If Philippians, chapter 2, gives us Christ's model for mission, Ephesians, chapter 2, gives us its goal, the bringing together of a divided humanity into one new people of God. Our message is the reconciling love of God as it has been shown to us in Jesus Christ. In Hiroshima this meant that we deliberately chose not to focus on one group, one kind of people. We believed that a congregation of the people of God ought to be able to bring together a wide variety of people if it were truly to be the body of Christ.

In our church life in Hiroshima we tried to emphasize what it is that builds us together as a new people of God, what it is that we have in common—not a nationality, not an ethnic identity, not a common social class. What we have in common is our faith, our commitment to Jesus Christ, the consciousness that we live in his love. As a congregation, that is all that we have in common, but it is also that which is most important to each of us.

From the beginning of our attempt to share the gospel with people in Hiroshima, we tried to be clear about why we were

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Robert L. Ramseyer, Elkhart, Indiana, is director of the Mission Training Center, a cooperative effort of Goshen Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Board of Missions from the Mennonite Church and Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The second part of this article is the text of a chapel address at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, in January 1983.

there and at what we were aiming. We tried to help people see clearly what we considered the church of God to be. We suggested to people that if they shared these goals, if the vision of the people of God was the kind of society that they were longing for, they were welcome to join us, walking together with us in trying to follow Jesus.

We were in Hiroshima not just to plant a church; we were there to plant a special kind of church, a church which would not try to manipulate people into doing things for it as if it had importance apart from them, but would rather liberate people to be what God intended them to be. We tried to keep reminding ourselves that we were not trying to gather people so that the church would be a success, but rather that we were trying to help with the birth of a church which would genuinely help people.

We were careful not to do anything which would have given people the impression that we were there to found a new religious institution, something that they could join if they chose, but which would have an existence of its own apart from people who might join it. In Japan most religious institutions do have a life of their own apart from a congregation, and many Christians understand the church in the same way. The church is not something in which they feel real ownership.

From the beginning we tried to help people see that we, the people, are the church, and without us there is no church. The church is a new primary group for us, not just another activity or membership which we add to those we already have. The church is like family or community, something that has the highest priority in our lives. People understood this message. Church activity for them was never something to participate in only if they happened to have time. Members always called if they could not participate, and they always had good reasons. We always knew just who would be participating in any activity, including Sunday worship.

Moving away from dependency

If we understand the church as a family, the people of God, it also follows that a new congregation ought not to be dependent for long on people who are not part of the congregation for things which are vital to congregational life. A congregation should not be financially dependent and ought not have to face a heavy burden for land, building, or pastoral support. From the beginning we met in the homes of people who participated in the congregation. We began without a separate church facility and had no plans for acquiring one in the future.

The congregation should not be dependent upon others for leadership. From the beginning we made conscious efforts to avoid having church activities become merely what we, the missionaries, do for the rest of the congregation. In the beginning I did do most of the preaching, but we also tried from the beginning to have others participate in worship leadership and to preach occasionally, even those who had just become Christians. We began Bible study with the clear understanding that this would not be me, the teacher, teaching the rest of the congregation as students.

We were all in this together. I led the first few times and tried to give help in how to prepare for leading a Bible study. After that we even took our turn in leadership. Obviously I, because of my training, knew more about the Bible than anyone else in the group; we all knew that, but we also found that new Christians coming to the Bible as a new document often find things that older Christians miss just because we have read it so often.

From the beginning we tried to be entirely flexible about meeting times and places. When someone asked us when we would be having a meeting we frequently replied, "When would you like to meet?" We decided that we would not schedule public meetings until there were people who wanted to meet. We wanted to be sure that people never got the idea that worship is something that is done for them, something that will go on whether they are there or not, that they are passive spectators at something put on by religious professionals. We did not announce meetings and invite people to come; rather, we tried to share our vision for a church fellowship, and when people expressed interest, we tried to arrange for a meeting which they could attend.

In this way we began slowly, but as we did begin, participants had a sense of ownership in what was happening. We almost entirely avoided having casual visitors who come a few times and then drop away, discouraging the newly forming group and causing them to wonder what they are doing wrong to cause people to lose interest. In three and a half years, only three people attended a few times and then stopped coming.

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MISSION FOCUS (ISSN 0164-4696) is published quarterly at 500 S. Main St., Elkhart, Indiana, by Mennonite Board of Missions. Single copies available without charge. Send correspondence to Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515. Second-class postage paid at Elkhart, Ind., and at additional mailing offices. Lithographed in USA.
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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MISSION FOCUS, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

Being church from the start

When a church begins in this way it has a sense of being a church, a real church, from the beginning. It is not a small group trying to grow so that eventually it can be large enough to be a real church with a building, pews, an organ, and the other things that large congregations have. It needs to emphasize the things that a small group can do well rather than try to do what only a large church can do, or feel bad because it is not a large group. It needs to show the warmth, the flexibility, the deep caring about individuals, the informality that characterize a small primary group. It needs to have vision for the future and what growth will mean in its life and work.

For Hiroshima our vision is many groups, each one a real church, doing what a small group of the people of God can do, but also it is all of these groups coming together to witness together to what it means to be God's people today in the city of Hiroshima.

Trying to do: teacher in North America

In the season after Christmas, we are more conscious than usual of how God shared something important with us. When God wanted to share love with us, that love came as a baby, the weakest and most vulnerable form of humanity, in order to be sure that we would get the message. All through his life Jesus had no economic power, no social power, nor the power that a superior education might have given him. All through his life, Jesus rejected the power that most of us use daily to protect ourselves and prolong our lives. Near the end when he was confronted by the authorities of his society he had only two alternatives. He could have fled, as he and his family did shortly after his birth, or he could deliver himself into their hands and take the road to the cross.

In the second chapter of his letter to the Philippians Paul tells us that Jesus gave up all of the resources that he could have called on as the Son of God, and that he entered human society as a servant, as a slave. Jesus was the most vulnerable, the weakest of human beings, as far as human society measures power and weakness. Paul tells us that Jesus deliberately chose that status in human society; he chose it because he had something to share with us.

The servant way is the only way

Jesus came to share God's love with us. He not only shares God's love with us; he calls on all of his followers to share that same love with others. His mission is our mission, and his way of sharing is to be our way. Jesus not only gave us a message; he also showed us how to share that message. He showed us that his way of sharing the message of God's love is the only way that it can be shared. There is no other way.

The history of the Christian church is interesting as we see how often we have been terribly concerned to preserve the content of Christ's message as faithfully as possible, worrying over its precise wording, and at the same time how often we have totally ignored his way of sharing it. We seem to believe that while the phrasing of the message is important, it can be shared in any way that seems expedient at the moment. We have treated the gospel as if it were a kind of television commercial for God's love, as if it were something that we were trying to sell and all we need are better communicating and marketing techniques.

If what we need are better techniques, we might ask ourselves why God didn't just develop a super public address system and share the message that way instead of going through all the trouble and agony that came with Jesus through his birth, his life, and his death on the cross. Why didn't God do it the practical way? What makes us think that we can do it the practical way if God couldn't?

Jesus shared the gospel with us in the way he did because the content of the message determines the way that it can be shared. With the gospel, the message of God's love, Jesus' way is the only way. There is no other way. God's love demands that it be shared in this way. This is what God's love is.

When we try to share the gospel from a position of power, from a position of authority, it becomes not good news at all but a new kind of religious burden which is being added to the burdens that people already bear. How well can an authoritarian parent share the gospel with his or her own children?

The servant way is a lifetime way

The passage in Philippians also makes clear that when Jesus became a servant he was not just play-acting. His was not a role that he played sometimes when it seemed to be a good thing to do. Jesus really was a servant. This is not something that comes easily or naturally for us. We use the term *servant* a great deal in the church, but most of the time we don't really mean it. The term *minister*, for example, means a kind of servant, but most of the time we mean someone with authority, a power figure in the church. We talk about being a servant of the Word, but again we mean someone with authority. Becoming a real servant takes effort and training. It is not something for a period in one's life; it is a lifetime commitment.

Not only is sharing the gospel difficult from a position of power; Paul goes on to tell us in his first letter to the church at Corinth that to a great many people the message itself is nonsense. The gospel offers nothing for scholars to grasp. It is not something that can be proved, either by scientific evidence or philosophical arguments. No authoritative footnotes document the good news of God's love as Jesus has shared it with us. We find no bibliography, no reading list which will authenticate the message. The message has no academic status. Sharing the gospel, then, requires servants with no earthly authority, sharing a message which makes no academic sense.

I have dedicated my life to sharing the gospel. I have tried to be a sharer of the gospel in Japan for many years. I am in Indiana to try to help people become sharers of the gospel. But how does sharing the gospel square with my being a seminary professor? In what sense is a seminary professor a servant with no earthly authority sharing a message which makes no academic sense?

One of the first things that I discovered when I joined the seminary faculty in 1972 was that professors do have power and authority. We can talk about all being equally part of one Christian community, but there is a difference between being on the faculty and being a student. Students experience a great deal of institutional pressure to listen to what professors say, to try to remember, and even to try to believe what professors tell them. Outside the seminary I discovered that it made a difference whether I was introduced in a church as a missionary or as a seminary professor. A seminary professor is expected to stress academic respectability, the wisdom of the wise, the understanding of scholars.

The servant way is a contradictory way

In other words, although my job at the seminary is to help to prepare people to be sharers of the gospel, my position seems to contradict what I am trying to do. This is not merely an apparent contradiction; it is the actual situation. It is the situation not only for seminary professors, but for many pastors and missionaries as well. Merely by standing behind the pulpit a pastor may seem to be saying, "You must take seriously what I say because I am your pastor." Is it any wonder that a pastor may find

it difficult to share good news? Some missionaries find themselves in positions of institutional authority when they take up assignments in other countries. Is it any wonder that they are often perceived more as bringers of new religious burdens than as sharers of good news?

After I had been teaching at seminary for a few years I discovered that I was getting far too accustomed to the authority of a seminary professor. I had undoubtedly become a better teacher, and the theories were beginning to fit together logically. But I was no longer able to really feel the vulnerability, the powerlessness of a servant, of a sharer of the gospel. I was better able to teach missiologists but much less able to help people become missionaries, people who can share good news.

For me to help people become missionaries, I not only need to have the theories and the knowledge; I also have to have the experience of being a missionary recently enough that I can still feel what it is like to try to share the gospel from a situation in which there is no way to get a hearing except in the winsomeness of that message itself. And so, after six years in Elkhart we went back to Japan to take up a church-planting assignment there. We went back first of all because we believed that God was calling us to that work. We also went back because we felt that fresh experience was absolutely essential if we were going to train servants who would share God's love for others. After four years of sharing the gospel in Japan again, we are more than ever convinced that what we did was absolutely essential, and once again we feel the tension between the call of us all to be servant sharers of the gospel and the institutional structures which seem to belie that which we say that we believe.

So, where does that leave us?

He saw that they were sad and said, "How hard it is for those in authority, for those with church authority or the authority of education to share the good news. It is much harder for one in authority, for a seminary professor or the pastor of a church, to share the gospel than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

The people who heard him were astonished and asked, "Who then can share the gospel?"

He answered, "What is impossible for human beings is possible for God."

The Choele Choel Experience in Argentina

A People Full of Joy

B. FRANK BYLER

Choele Choel, Argentina, is a frontier town just across the river from a large irrigated fruit-bearing island between two rivers in Rio Negro Province. A high percentage of residents are immigrants from neighboring countries.

Church growth

Mennonite work in Choele Choel began when Floyd and Alice Sieber moved to that city in 1969. For three years no new people were initiated into the church there.

Siebers' approach was deliberately unprofessional. They were determined to form a church only of persons whom the Holy Spirit might call, and not those whom merely human efforts could persuade. They proceeded without direct evangelistic meetings or invitations to conversion.

Floyd was a farmer at heart as well as a missionary. He soon had chickens, sold eggs, and won his way in the community as one who understood farm animals and crops. Alice was gifted with a love for people. She drank maté (a social tea-drinking custom) and made friends through neighborly visits with women nearby. Their son John, a good soccer player, won admiration and friends by playing on local soccer teams. Their daughter Wanda in subsequent years has displayed a winning way among women and children in the community. The Sieber family soon had many contacts, friends, and acquaintances with whom they conversed freely about their faith.

Finally after three years a person voluntarily expressed interest in baptism. More could have responded the same way. Rapport was good and people would have responded to human persuasion by Siebers, but they wanted God to bring them.

Siebers worked alone until 1972 when Diana and Rafael Estabile moved to Choele Choel to begin a grade school as part of the church's witness. The school did not develop, but a kindergarten did, and it continues to serve the community.

In 1972 the Choele Choel church had only ten or fifteen members including Siebers and Estabiles. The next three years saw the church experience miraculous growth. The congregation bought property, built a church house, and in 1975 enlarged to accommodate the crowd. By 1980 the congregation reached a membership of about 250. That number has been more or less maintained since then.

Church life

Spiritual crisis and renewal

Slow growth in the early years and concern for the work in Choele Choel produced a serious search in the Sieber family for spiritual renewal to meet their spiritual crisis and need for a change of perspective. They were determined to begin only what God wanted.

Spiritual renewal was happening in other churches, including Santa Rosa where Lawrence and Dorothy Brunk were then pastoring. Contact and encouragement from there led Siebers and their congregation to examine the Scriptures. This revealed a chasm between what Siebers saw in their church and ministry and what they saw in the New Testament. The Lord then blessed their search, and they experienced the promise of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. In one meeting during their search an invitation was given and perhaps three quarters of the group asked for baptism with the Holy Spirit. They felt, however, that they should not bring visiting speakers from other places to guide them, but rather to trust the Lord to do his own work with them.

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Foundations in Scripture

The church members began to expect God to speak new, practical, and contemporary things to them through the Scriptures. They encouraged personal Bible reading and heard God speak to them in a new way when they expected God to say something relevant. They encouraged each other to share these thoughts in public testimony, preaching, and prophecy. This became a living word and a miraculous element under the Spirit's power to convict and enlighten. The supernatural attracts people who are living in desperate circumstances that can be overcome only by the supernatural. Jesus becomes that supernatural one as worship and word are experienced authentically.

Sidetracks appeared at times. For a time some members overrated the value of dreams, visions, and personal thoughts as messages from the Lord. While those experiences were sometimes edifying, again a "blossoming tradition" had to be corrected by the Word and by the gift of spiritual discernment. What looked supernatural and attracted attention may have been only a tangent in disguise.

Teaching was effective in part because when something needed emphasis, the church dwelt upon it until all were thoroughly indoctrinated. The Bible spoke, but members also found opportune supplement through the magazine *New Wine*. A concern on a doctrinal or ethical question was not taught in just one meeting. A concern would arise in one meeting and continue in the next and the next, midweek and Sunday, perhaps for a couple of weeks. Finally everyone would be saying the same thing. It was impressive. Effective teaching requires repetition and serious efforts at obedience. In this way the Word of the Lord has authority and lives are transformed. The Choele Choel church has intended to stress a holy life as fundamental for serious discipleship.

Subjection is basic

In spite of all of these blessings, stalemate did come at Choele Choel, and new traditions appeared to hinder progress. The leaders learned that they must be the first to humble themselves and to repent in such moments. They had to read the Bible again and confess their need. In one meeting all the leaders knelt at the altar in humility, subordination, and repentance. They realized that what happens to the leaders is what finally happens to the congregation.

Subjection and humility then became a fundamental doctrine. All disciples must respect their teachers. Leaders must be subject to the spiritual head of the congregation. Subjection is voluntary but not an option for progress. Disciples can leave if they wish, as Jesus said in John 6. When conflict arises and rebellion or disagreement come, progress and blessing return only when humility and subjection are restored. This is true in the home, in the church, or in the classroom. Only where this subjection is learned can Jesus really be Lord and bring order and salvation out of chaos. In a world ruined by independence, individualism, and rebellion to authority, healing comes through this principle and practice. At least until there is maturity, full salvation cannot come until the truth of subjection is learned. This has had a wholesome and attractive effect in the life of the church.

Ministry to personal needs

Through their renewal experience and understanding of the Word, the Choele Choel leaders found new vision and liberty to minister to people's personal needs. The Spirit gave grace to respond to spiritual and physical needs through the prayer of faith in Jesus' name. Some answers to prayer were miraculous. People—not only the members, but people outside the fellowship as well—seek help from the church and its leaders.

Following the New Testament example the church began baptizing people immediately upon confessing Christ, instead of the traditional waiting, teaching, and testing period before baptism. To people without friends, relatives, or resources in a frontier context, this may have been an attraction to experience such immediate acceptance in a community. It was not done without hesitancy, however. Rafael almost felt like he was sinning the first time he was asked to bring water for immediate baptism. Later he became convinced it was right.

Ministry is evident beyond the healing, saving, intercessory ministry. The community has an obvious willingness to risk giving material help even to people who are new and unknown. Siebers' land, as well as other land, has become available as a source of employment and sustenance for people in need. Bolivian immigrants are given land for cultivation, and other people are given work.

For a time church members provided a home for single men and another for single young women without families nearby. Other opportunity is given for self-employment in a shop for mechanics and carpenters. Influential members help find jobs in town. Some people have received needy persons into their homes temporarily for rehabilitation or for getting started in life. A cooperative for bulk buying of food developed during a time of economic difficulty. No doubt this interest in persons in need has made an impact on the local community and has contributed to church growth.

Church government and organization

Church government takes the form of a pyramid, with fewer leaders of greater authority at the top and others at different levels subject to those directly above. Theologically, this subjection is mutually voluntary, but it is also necessary practically for the health and prosperity of the congregation. One Argentine Mennonite pastor has said that this is imperative to the development of a strong healthy congregation.

In this context the missionary with the help of a person from the larger Mennonite organization in Argentina appointed the present pastors and the first elders.

Satan tries to undo unity and divide through clashes, complaints, and rebellion, at times against authority. In such times the leaders have sought to find reconciliation and subjection in order to restore unity, blessing, and peace. Only as peace and unity exist at the leadership level can progress continue.

Organization has been kept at a minimum, with no church council and no committees. The group of eight or ten elders is the governing body. Teachers are responsible for different classes such as separate meetings for children during the sermon, study groups, or house groups. The congregation has never decided anything by voting, I am told.

While the congregation is geographically and organizationally somewhat distant from other Mennonite congregations, they have maintained identification with the Argentine Mennonite Church. They are Mennonite and participate in conference meetings, finances, and organizations.

Finances

Giving at Choele Choel has evidently been generous, even though no public offerings are lifted and little mention is made to remind members of offerings. Lots and houses have been bought, and church buildings have been built and then enlarged. Much labor has been donated voluntarily. Some help for these projects has come from North America, and help for the shops and homes for single people came from an organization in Europe.

Live, contagious worship

The worship service at Choele Choel is impressive. A spirit of joy and praise reigns. People's spirits are lifted to God as worship flows from chorus to chorus, interspersed with prayers, words of prophecy, and Scripture readings by willing participants as they respond to the Spirit moving them. John Sieber has a genuine charisma, a gift for leading worship. He leads with guitar in hand. The Spirit gives him new and appropriate choruses to echo the message of the Spirit and to make it become faith in life through repeated singing. The worship in Spirit and in truth effectively prepares hearts well disposed to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. Members are caught up with the Spirit and become eager to identify with the people of God in his kingdom, a people full of joy and admiration of the living Lord Jesus.

Case history not complete

The people in Choele Choel think they can identify certain stages in the development of their work. First was indirect evangelism with practically no visible results, but a good groundwork for future relationships was laid. Then came a spiritual crisis and a search for what was lacking, culminating in renewal through the baptism with the Holy Spirit. This was followed by renewed searching of the Scriptures with tradition-breaking obedience under the lordship of Christ.

Parallel to this and continuing on is the live worship experience without routine, where anything can happen: praise, singing, prophecy, prayer, intercession, ministry to urgent needs, conversion, baptism. Other stages marked the effort to provide homes for single people and an effort at cooperative buying for the economy of households. In due time the church began house meetings for Bible study and personal ministry and discipline, and finally came the era of using small farms for giving livelihood to Bolivian immigrants. Their missionary vision extended the Choele Choel witness to Conesa (farther south), Chile, and Bolivia.

Perhaps a word of caution should be given with this study. The church at Choele Choel is not perfect nor entirely unique. While the congregation there had experienced phenomenal growth for a few years, it seems to have leveled off in the last couple of years. This was the case in earlier years in other Mennonite missions such as Pehuajo, Tres Lomas, Trenque Lauquen, and Carlos Casares. These other churches also experienced rapid growth, church building, large crowds, followed by a leveling off and then a decline in membership when the initial thrust came to an end.

The main leaders in Choele Choel—as in some other places—have not risen from the local effort, but rather have come in as second-generation Christians from other places and sometimes other denominations. Perhaps the work in Choele Choel is too new yet to expect local talent to be developed sufficiently. In some other Mennonite churches in Argentina, local leaders have effectively taken over and healthy congregational life is evident. One would hope that that will happen in Choele Choel.

Refugee Churches in North America

Cross-Cultural Mission at Home

DANIEL SCHROCK

North America is a continent of refugees and sons and daughters of refugees. From the Pilgrims to the more recent influx of Southeast Asian, Caribbean, and Latin-American refugees, North America has had a history of refugee migrations from other parts of the world.

Refugees normally try to preserve, at least for a time, the language, culture, and customs of their previous homes. As a result, miniature cultures develop within the larger surrounding culture. When the North American church attempts to work with these new residents in evangelism and discipleship, it must muster all the intercultural sensitivities possible.

A brief review

In the past decade North Americans have witnessed the entrance of large numbers of refugees. In the 1970s Southeast Asians began to come in the wake of the Vietnam War. In the 1980s refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico entered the Southwest; at the same time Cubans and Haitians came to Florida. Normally the church's initial involvement with these refugees was in resettlement, emergency aid, and in the case of some Central American people in the Southwest, the development of an underground railroad in open defiance of the government's deportation policies. Because physical needs of refugees are so urgent, the church is able to address church planting and development among refugees only after the initial excitement has diminished.

The last decade has not been the only time in history that the church has worked with refugees in North America. Since the first Europeans arrived, the church has either consisted of refugees or the descendants of refugees, or it has been called upon to minister to refugees. Most Mennonites who came to North America were refugees. Those already in North America responded vigorously to the needs of their newly arrived brothers and sisters. Financial and spiritual assistance was readily available. Usually these refugees were of the same or similar cultural groups.

However, not until late in the nineteenth century did Mennonites begin to take an interest in refugees from outside their

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own household of faith. The interest began as a result of two phenomena. The first was an awakening of missionary fervor within Protestantism generally and also among Mennonites; the second was the beginning of movement from rural to urban life with its greater cultural diversity.

So evangelism took Mennonites to the city and the city introduced them to refugees. Ninety years ago Mennonites established a home mission in Chicago. Others followed in other cities; the church was beginning to take seriously the call to disciple all nations.

In recent decades a number of non-European refugee groups have joined the church. Today we see Chinese, Mexican, Thai Dam, Chilean, and Haitian Mennonite churches, among others. In the coming years there will doubtless be more, as refugees continue to come to North America and as Mennonites continue to respond to their spiritual and material needs.

Refugee ministry in Florida

One such refugee group has been the influx of Haitians into southern Florida. Since 1972, some 32,000 Haitians have come to Florida by official count, although the actual number may be closer to 50,000 (Metropolitan Dade County, Office of the County Manager, 1981: 6). Most have arrived by small, rickety, open boats since 1980. About 95 percent have stayed in Florida, since its climate resembles that of Haiti. All of them came to Miami first; by now some 20,000 have moved to other cities in southern Florida.

The section of Miami where most of the Haitians live resembles a Haiti in miniature, with all of its customs and traditions. Shop signs are in French and Creole, the common language of Haitians. Restaurants serve distinctly Haitian food. Sidewalks are full of children talking with each other in Creole.

Soon after the Haitians arrived, a number of Mennonites in Florida and elsewhere were concerned about the material and spiritual needs of these refugees. In 1980 Mennonite Central Committee started a unit of workers in Miami to address some of these needs; in 1982 it opened a second unit in Belle Glade, two hours to the north. In 1981 representatives of various conferences and mission boards met in Miami to determine how the church could respond in a broader way to the influx of Haitians and Cubans, who had also arrived in great numbers. As a result of these conversations, the Mennonite churches in Dade County (in which Miami is located) formed the Association of Mennonite Ministries (AMM), with the purpose of starting and encouraging refugee churches.

While the organizations were preparing for mission, personal friendships between local Mennonites and Haitians had begun to form. James Sauder, a Miami Mennonite who trains church leaders in Latin America, and Joseph Sterling, a Haitian pastor who had already begun a church in Miami, met after nearly five years of no contact. Immediately Joseph asked for assistance in building his congregation. Soon, in 1981, four young men who had known of Mennonite Central Committee in Haiti wrote a letter to MCC asking for someone who could give them Bible teaching. MCC contacted James Sauder, and with his help the four men began a congregation. Since then the Ebenezer Church of Christian Reconciliation has grown to about twenty-five adults, and on March 13, 1983, it became the first Haitian church to join the Southeast Mennonite Convention of the Mennonite Church.

AMM works in partnership with refugee churches such as Ebenezer. Relationships between AMM workers and Haitian church members usually begin with biblical studies. If at some point the church needs financial assistance to move into a larger place of worship, AMM may help meet that need. In October 1982, for example, AMM helped Joseph Sterling's church buy a larger building for worship.

Since AMM is really a group of churches, partnership is facilitated by a small group of people. This group is the Congregational Development Committee (CDC), consisting of three or four members of AMM churches who meet periodically with congregational leaders in the Haitian churches to discuss how partnership should happen. The first contact between the CDC and church leaders is simply for becoming acquainted. The next step is for the church to set goals that it wishes to achieve in its corporate life. At this point each partner decides what it needs to do in order to reach the goals. Along the way both groups evaluate what has happened.

Partnership, however, is never simply just giving or just receiving. Both AMM and the refugee church give, and both receive. One way in which the AMM member churches receive is through the trilingual worship services held every three months. At these services all Mennonite or Mennonite-related churches participate, whether they are English, Spanish, or Haitian Creole. Four English, one Spanish, and three Haitian churches now attend. AMM has prepared a trilingual songbook that has a variety of songs translated into all three languages. Sometimes the gathered worshipers sing the same song in their own tongue at the same time! God's kingdom has unity within diversity.

Once the refugee church moves from an emerging church to an established church, it becomes eligible for membership in AMM. The newly established church no longer receives assistance and assumes all spiritual and financial responsibility for its ministries. As a member of AMM, it has the opportunity to assist in turn other refugee churches in faithfulness, growth, and service. It becomes a partner in mission to South Florida.

AMM's work has had rough moments; the churches have miscommunicated and misunderstood on several occasions. Perhaps the greatest potential danger is a lack of cross-cultural sensitivity. Significant cultural differences exist between middle-class white Mennonites and lower-class black Haitians. Patience, sympathy, and sometimes forgiveness are necessary on all sides in order for partnership to be successful. An understanding of each other's cultural habits and expectations can go a long way in preserving good relationships.

"Overseas" mission at home

In this sense refugee churches in America pose special problems that even North American missionaries overseas do not face: While the missionaries who go to another country realize that they must contextualize the gospel, the missionaries who go to refugees in North America may not be as aware of the need for contextualization. Here, missionaries are on their own turf, not on someone else's. But the need for contextualization remains.

Among refugees, home missions must therefore take on the characteristics of planting and encouraging churches in other countries. In our day "overseas" mission may just as easily happen in our own backyard. Working with refugees from the Third World is an opportunity for the North American church to practice the unity of Christ even while recognizing different but equally legitimate ways of worshiping God. God's kingdom, after all, is itself multi-cultural.

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Congregationalism and Accountability: A Model

EUGENE SEALS

A model is like a dress pattern. When my wife makes a dress, she uses a pattern. I notice that when she follows the pattern, the results are commendable. Sometimes she says that the pattern is not "her," so she **adapts** the pattern so that it says "Shirley." Then the results are pleasing. Likewise, a denominational organization model needs adaptation for any local situation.

Who is accountable?

Scripture teaches that we shall each stand before God who will judge our works (1 Cor. 3:12-15). Too many Christians are content to relegate to pastors the responsibility for Christian work. After all, the congregation is paying the pastor, they reason.

The pastor and congregation ought to be accountable to and for each other, much like a biblical marriage: Two equal, independent individuals give up their God-given independence, merging into one. Often in the emotion of God's incomparable moonlight, a man and a woman agree to make a life together, not counting the awesome dimensions of that commitment. Similarly, when pastors are called, how often do we discuss who is going to be the "boss"? How many marriages have run into difficulty on this question by discussing it after the wedding when all discussions are permeated with subjectivity, emotion, and other harsh realities! The society in which we live promotes a dual standard. A man is taught that he must "wear the pants" in the family. A woman is taught to resist that role definition. Nobody seems to care that Scripture says, "Submit yourselves to each other."

The traditional model of church governance is hierarchical with the pastor at the top. The members are accountable to the pastor (usually only the pastor). The pastor is accountable to God. Some scriptural references seem to support this model. The seeking servant will ask if this scriptural support is by command or by permission. This is the same spirit in which we ask if the communal living of Acts was by command and therefore definitive today.

Hierarchical models have had periods of rough sledding over the past 2000 years. The Reformation started but stopped short of rectifying the deficiency of this model. The Radical Reformation (Anabaptism), in a quiet, unassuming way gave rise to today's congregational model of accountability. For more than 450 years, Mennonites have resisted a strong central denominational hierarchy, with good justification.

While twentieth-century Mennonite congregationalism has broken away from the extreme form of the denominational-hierarchical model, it has retained hierarchical trappings in terms of the pastoral and bishop models, with some notable exceptions. Many Mennonite congregations and pastors attempt to operate on the basis of consensus. Others operate hierarchically by default, having no generally agreed-to model. True congregationalism would make the congregation accountable to elected or appointed congregational representatives. An elder or bishop board seems to be the most likely body of ultimate accountability, although deacons or a church council might serve the need as they do in some places.

My perception, however, is that the latter two groups should be helpers for the pastor in his or her task of mobilizing lay members for the work of the ministry. Nonetheless, the spirit of this article would allow for a variety of titles and groupings, provided such a body would consist of the most spiritually perceptive persons in the congregation, including the pastor if the congregation would so choose.

Even though an elder board would be held accountable for the discharging of the congregation's mission, **one** elder would need to be elected to be spokesperson for the board. This would simplify communication.

This proposed model envisions mutual accountability of all believers in the spirit of Ephesians 5, where wife and husband are commanded to "submit . . . to one another."

Toward a model

Some pastors are gifted with church development skills, whereas others are not. Some congregations are "babes" and require one kind of development. Other congregations require another kind of leadership. Job descriptions for pastors will need to vary to recognize variations in gifts and circumstances. The job descriptions must include the requirement to "exercise creativity and initiative in carrying out the assignment."

Authentic church development should be characterized by broad consultations and joint planning involving conferences, mission boards, and congregations.

The accompanying figure, "A Proposed Church Development Model," is replete with two-way arrows depicting extensive continuing dialogue between parties regarding the responsibilities listed in the boxes. Consensus is the preferred mode of operation for God's people. However, responsibility for products identified in one box cannot be placed on parties listed in another box even though consensus was sought. In other words, "the buck stops" where indicated.

The model requires top-down development. The WHAT SHOULD BE DONE should be decided before we strike out with the WHERE and the BY WHOM. Of course, the faithful congregation is one which most closely follows the biblical essence in the bottom box (turning the world right side up). But since no two situations are alike, discernment is necessary from the conference on down. Nor should we allow pettiness to

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admit suspicion and competitiveness into the model.

All relationships should be characterized by openness, frankness, mutual accountability, transparency, and vulnerability. The more skilled members should be willing to promote the development of the others with Christ-like patience and encouragement.

The benefits of this proposal can be seen best by starting at the bottom of the model and moving up. (Please refer to the figure to follow the flow.) Comprehensive budgets (G) can be prepared when leaders take the long view of their departments' plans (D). This is analogous to Christ's admonition to estimate the total costs before embarking on programs. It is not enough to say that the music department or the Sunday school department or the pastoral department will spend the same as last year. Careful planning may indicate sizable increases in certain areas and decreases in other areas as a result of external influences and changing priorities. In addition, unforeseen circumstances may require midyear budget revisions.

Together, budgets (G) and plans (D) provide mechanisms for controlling programs for objectively determining whether or not we are on target. With plans and budgets we can challenge our congregations to responsible stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. A person can be a cheerful giver when he or she knows the program and the need.

The department heads' annual plans (D) should be concise and clear enough to be understood by persons who work with the department heads. Well-written annual plans (D) can be revised ever so slightly to form the bulk of the annual report (F). For example, the annual plan (D) might state (in the future tense): "Sunday school teachers *will follow up* on absentees the following Monday." The annual report (F) could simply change the tense: "Sunday school teachers *followed up* on absentees the following Monday." An annual plan such as this example is **measurable.** One can determine whether and when it was or was not achieved. If this example goal failed to be carried out, the annual report could simply change the verb to past tense and add a negative: "Sunday school teachers *did not follow up* on absentees," adding an explanation for the failure to do so. Better yet is the situation where a **revised** plan was achieved: "Teachers *followed up* on absentees the following Tuesday."

Good annual planning (D) follows documentation and acceptance of the congregation's five-year goals (B) and the pastor's five-year plan (C). The elders might begin their goal setting by answering the big question: "Where (or what) does God want this congregation to go (or to do) over the next five years?" Then the answers to five intermediate questions will set the stage for the five-year goals: "What must be achieved in year one? Year two? Year three? Year four? Year five?

The pastor then formulates plans (C) for his or her management of the departments (including the pastoral department) to achieve the congregation's goals (B). The bulk of the day-to-day work planned for the congregation is contained in the department head's plans (D) above.

All of this planning should emanate from a conference and denominational strategy (A). Denominational and conference leadership are in the best position to speak to broad, long-range goals. Their wisdom should be solicited. While acknowledging that humans may never expect to understand fully God's will, leadership has the responsibility to develop a master plan for church planting, evangelism, service, stewardship, and so forth.

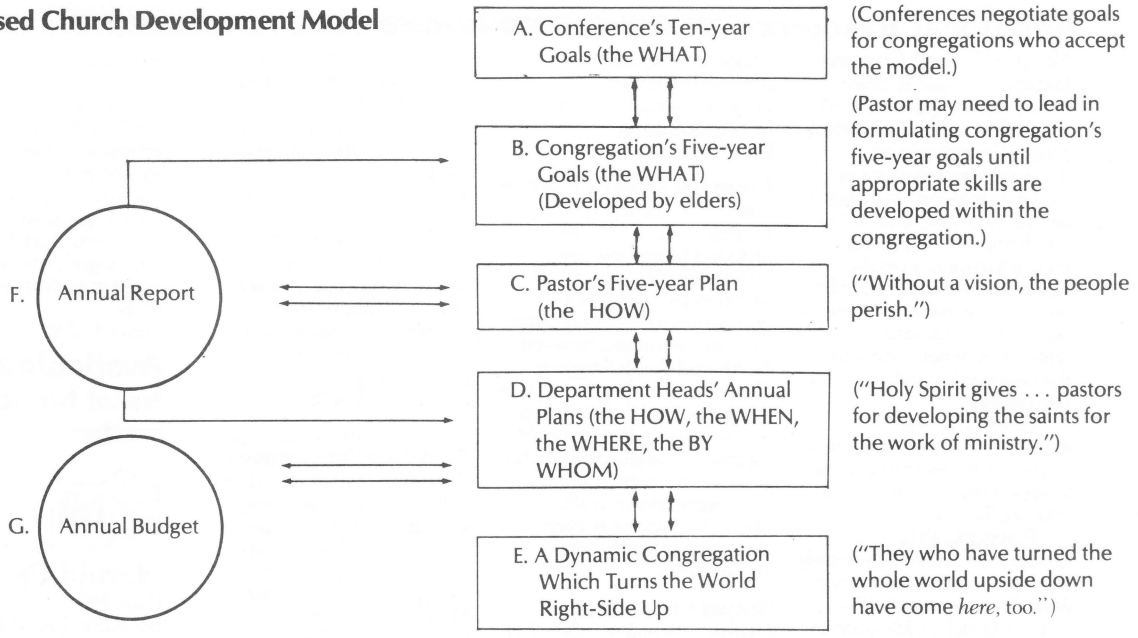
Training for accountability

What is the conclusion of this matter? Our congregations are expected to turn the world right-side-up. Without accountability, no one can say whether a given congregation—or the entire denomination—is measuring up to its potential. It is only reasonable that we challenge one another. The proposed model, suitably modified, could move us in that direction.

Many leaders do the essential parts of the goals-planning process effectively in their heads. We may refer to such persons as **born** leaders. But born leaders are so few and far between that we need to heed Paul's advice to Titus: "ordain leaders." This includes training. The planning process includes distributing clear, concise, comprehensible documentation to the congregation **during** and after the planning cycle.

In order to accelerate leadership development, we need to provide a support and accountability structure such as the one introduced here. While various roles must be accepted—which allows for responsible leaders to make unilateral or authoritarian decisions when consensus fails to develop on rare occasions—the general rule is one of congeniality, mutuality, Christian affirmation of each other, and consensus.

A Proposed Church Development Model


A. Conference's Ten-year Goals (the WHAT)
(Conferences negotiate goals for congregations who accept the model.)
B. Congregation's Five-year Goals (the WHAT) (Developed by elders)
(Pastor may need to lead in formulating congregation's five-year goals until appropriate skills are developed within the congregation.)
F. Annual Report
C. Pastor's Five-year Plan (the HOW)
("Without a vision, the people perish.")
D. Department Heads' Annual Plans (the HOW, the WHEN, the WHERE, the BY WHOM)
("Holy Spirit gives . . . pastors for developing the saints for the work of ministry.")
G. Annual Budget
E. A Dynamic Congregation Which Turns the World Right-Side Up
("They who have turned the whole world upside down have come *here*, too.")

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In review

Mennonite Women: A Story of God's Faithfulness, 1683-1983. By Elaine Sommers Rich. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1983, 257 pp., $9.95 ($11.95 Canada), (pb)

Reviewed by Doris S. Shenk

The Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) of the Mennonite Church should be commended for undertaking and completing this major project. The research had to be extensive, for almost nothing is available in print about our foremothers. The written and pictorial contributions provided by many women and men in the church add much to personalize this book for the reader.

But the book is not just a series of stories; it is a carefully dated historical record of hundreds of Mennonite women. In the first two chapters Elaine Sommers Rich has ably included narratives of little-known sixteenth and seventeenth-century European Mennonite women, many of whom became martyrs.

In October 1683 a group of German Mennonites (including eleven women) arrived in North America and began the first permanent Mennonite settlement in the New World. Today Mennonite women are the recipients of a strong heritage. Rich says, "This heritage of knowing how to work with one's hands, practicing hospitality, living frugally, and contributing to the welfare of the community through cooperative work constitutes a heritage that should be treasured and passed on to future generations. Values which once were necessary in order to survive in the wilderness may still be necessary in order to survive on the globe."

Church records show that women were given major responsibilities in the late 1800s and in the first two decades of the 1900s. The Middle District of the Virginia Conference practiced the ordination of deaconesses from about 1880 to 1929. Women in various areas kept dying churches from being closed—churches which were later revived. Other women were instrumental in starting new churches. A number of women were speakers in Sunday school conferences. While women did not hold offices in church conferences, they did in Sunday school organizations.

Sometimes the Spirit planted conviction in the hearts of single women for foreign mission work before the church was ready to send them. For some, the Chicago Home Mission was a place to serve; others married and then went abroad to serve with their husbands. City and rural missions used the gifts of scores of Mennonite women, as did institutions such as children's homes, the Mennonite Publishing House, and hospitals. "Mennonite women have been physicians, healers, midwives, and nurses." Two have been horse-and-buggy doctors.

To have a women's organization as part of the church structure was not easy. "Sewings" began in the last decade of the nineteenth century and multiplied rapidly, but Clara Eby Steiner (1873-1929) and others were opposed when they attempted to gain recognition for the Mennonite Woman's Missionary Society as part of the official church structure. In 1929 the work of this organization was completely taken over by Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, and women found themselves largely confined to the work of Sewing Circles again. As a result, some of the former leaders moved into service areas in other denominations. Finally, in 1947, when the name Women's Missionary and Sewing Circle Organization (WMSO) was chosen, there was no more opposition. Since 1971 the present name (WMSC) has been the official one.

In reading a 300-year survey one misses the names of some who undoubtedly deserved to be included. In chapter 12 Rich says, "One can only hope that later researchers will continue the task of gathering information about Mennonite women."

All women and men of the Mennonite Church should read this book. One can only say in conclusion—praise God for the faithfulness of our Mennonite foremothers.

Doris S. Shenk is a part-time secretarial assistant in the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries office, Elkhart, Indiana. She was the assistant to the dean at Goshen (Indiana) College (1965-75) and taught in public and parochial schools for fifteen years.

People of the Way: Selected Essays and Addresses. By J. A. Toews, edited by Abe J. Dueck, Herbert Giesbrecht, and Allen R. Guenther. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Historical Committee of the Board of Higher Education, Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1981, 245 pp., $11.00

Reviewed by Paul N. Kraybill

This compilation of selected essays and addresses by John A. Toews is a fitting tribute to one of those remarkable men who pioneered during the traumatic times of immigration and settlement by Mennonites from the Soviet Union to Canada. As minister, writer, evangelist, teacher, educator, conference leader, and sometime scholar, his life was a stabilizing and steadying influence in the early days on the frontier.

A committed churchman, loyal to the Mennonite Brethren Church, Toews was also a highly respected member of the larger community, participating enthusiastically in inter-Mennonite ventures. We have here a man deeply committed to the Scriptures in the evangelical tradition, but also a man with courage to carry on a vigorous ministry of teaching and preaching that reflected strong Anabaptist convictions, in spite of the fact that many from his own Mennonite Brethren tradition did not share this vision.

This book includes not only a biographical sketch, but also a series of articles, sermons, and lectures drawn from his copious legacy of written materials. Included in the book is an impressive twelve-page bibliography of his writings and tape recordings covering the period 1935-80.

The editors do a credible job of selecting from a wealth of material a series of representative articles and essays. The material is grouped into five sections and consists of a total of twenty-five separate essays or addresses. Inevitably, such a collection has a lack of continuity, some unevenness of style and quality, and at best a somewhat diverse collection of material written over a span of twenty-five years.

The book covers a wide range of materials on the nature of the church, peace, nonresistance, unity, mission, inter-Mennonite relationships, and ecumenism. These are not scholarly source materials but rather materials useful for teaching and instruction. They are basically doctrinal in content and represent an interesting and significant contribution to Mennonite literature, especially useful to those who seek to relate Anabaptist principles to the evangelical tradition.

Paul N. Kraybill, Strasbourg, France, is Executive Secretary of Mennonite World Conference.

Christianity and the Religions of the East: Models for a Dynamic Relationship. Edited by Richard W. Rousseau, S. J. University of Scranton (Pa.): Ridge Row Press, 1982, 174 pp., $12.00 (pb)

Reviewed by Ronald W. Neufeldt

This is the second volume of the series, *Modern Theological Themes: Selections from the Literature.* As in the case of the first volume, *Interreligious Dialogue: Facing the Next Frontier,* the concern is to establish the need for dialogue and understanding between Christianity and the great religious traditions of the world and to suggest ways in which this dialogue and understanding might be developed.

The essays are divided into a number of sections. Section I, "Approaches," has two essays: "Review of The Long Search," a film series on world religions, and "The Yin-Yang Way of Thinking" which proposes the need to break through the exclusive either/or categories which characterize much of Western theological thinking.

Section II, "Hinduism" includes three essays: "Some Contributions of Hinduism to Christianity," "The Bhagavad-Gita as a Way-Shower," and "The Trinity and the Structure of Religious Life: An Indian Contribution to Wider Christian Theology."

Section III, "Buddhism," includes five essays: "Buddhism and Christianity as Complementary," "Buddhism and Christianity," "Some Problems and Possibilities for Burmese Theology Today," "Horizons on Christianity's New Dialogue with Buddhism," and "Wisdom and Love as the Basis for Preaching in Buddhism and Christianity."

Section IV, "Chinese Confucianism and Maoism," includes "Christian Theology in an Asian Setting: The Gospel and Chinese Intellectual Culture" and "A Covenant with the Chinese." The book ends with the 1977 statement of the World Council of Churches Theological Consultation on Dialogue in Community.

The value of the book is that it brings together in one volume essays which have been written for a variety of journals. As such it is an admirable attempt to deal with a rather complex issue and does in fact give a survey of some of the current thinking on Christianity's relationship to the great religious traditions of the world.

I have three concerns with the book. The first has to do with the term *dialogue.* I have the uncomfortable feeling that some of the writers understand dialogue to mean agreement or coming to agreement on basic beliefs. Consequently, the tendency is to blur the real differences that do exist among religious traditions.

The second concern has to do with style. Some of the essays are difficult to understand if one has not been schooled in Whiteheadian philosophy and the whole enterprise of process theology.

The third concern has to do with content. I find some of the essays, particularly those concerning Hinduism and Buddhism, inaccurate with respect to understanding basic ideas and scriptures within these traditions. Dialogue, if it is to be carried on at all, must be done with care to mirror accurately traditions other than our own.

A book such as this cannot, however, do everything. This is a good start in the right direction.

Ronald W. Neufeldt is an Associate Professor in the Department of Religious Studies, University of Calgary (Alberta).

"They pray for you ..."—Independent Churches and Women in Botswana. By Leny Lagerwerf. Leiden: Inter-University Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research, 1982, 136 pp., fl. 12.50 (pb)

Reviewed by James E. Bertsche

In the title of her book Leny Lagerwerf seeks to highlight an attractive dynamic which is observable in so many African Independent Churches (their readiness to pray with and for anyone concerning any expressed need) and the particular focus of her study (the roles and significance of women in these churches).

A staff member of the Department of Missiology of the Inter-University Institute, Lagerwerf is professionally at home in the area of documentation, which is reflected in an extensive bibliography. Her book has specific reference to the Botswana scene in which her study took place.

Lagerwerf organizes her material under six basic headings, the first three of which deal basically with a historical background. Section one describes the origins of the Tswana-speaking people and the shape of their cultural patterns, including a brief reference to the position of women in their traditional society and the incidence of unmarried mothers.

Section two traces the advent of Christian missions and how they became intertwined with the colonial history of the various areas of Botswana and the implications this had for indigenous movements which were discouraged if not banned outright.

Section three is devoted to an assessment of the impact of political independence upon the church community and the ongoing struggle of the Independent Churches to achieve their own identity and acceptance. A review of the government concerns which led to the passing of the Societies Act of 1972 provides helpful background. The statement of some of the concerns of the Independent Churches helps

round out an understanding of their ongoing call for recognition and more equitable treatment at the hands of both government and mainline churches.

In section four the author selects three Independent Churches as the focus of her study. All three represent churches of the "apostolic" tradition, all three were founded within Botswana and had branches in Gaborone, and at least one of them had a female founder. Lagerwerf devotes attention to their patterns of worship, the rites and practices observed, and the roles played by women. This section effectively highlights some of the dominant Independent Church themes and concerns which become apparent to even the most casual observer: the need for protection and fortification against malicious spiritual powers; protection and purification rites as practiced by the three churches; blessing and the treatment of illness, healing methods, and the practice of prayer.

Only in section five does the author come specifically to the treatment of the subtitle of her book, *Independent Churches and Women in Botswana.* After citing several women who have founded Independent Churches in Southern Africa, Lagerwerf relates the activities she was able to observe during her research. This includes ministries as speakers, as church officers, and as healers or healing assistants depending upon the setting and the occasion.

In a concluding sixth section Lagerwerf presented a brief discussion of the frequency and the problems of unmarried mothers in Tswana society and the contrasting reception they encounter in mainline and independent churches. Out of this part of her study she derived the name of her book, "*They pray for you . . .* ," reflecting the support and sympathetic concern troubled individuals typically find within the fellowship of Independent Churches.

An appendix contains some fresh material in the form of the personal reflections of Thandi Lebotse, the author's companion and interpreter during her two-month period of research in Gaborone in 1979. It provides intriguing insight into the life and inner workings of the Independent Church community through the eyes and memory of a girl who grew up in intimate contact with several groups as the daughter of a mother who herself was a spiritual healer.

Although the scope of field research, language facility, and access to primary sources of information have clear limitations, this study nonetheless makes a significant contribution to the growing amount of material being produced on the topic of African Independent Churches of Southern Africa. This book effectively calls attention to the major and thus far insufficiently recognized roles and contributions of women to the Independent Church movement of Africa.

James E. Bertsche is executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Elkhart, Indiana.

Issues in Missiology. By Edward C. Pentecost. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982, 205 pp., $11.95

Reviewed by Robert L. Ramseyer

Issues in Missiology is apparently intended as a text for introductory courses in missions. Chapters cover missionary theology, the scriptural context, the cultural and spiritual mandates, the church in its nature and function, and the book of Acts. This includes principles or patterns, people and their cultures, people and their mentalities, the communication process, the conversion process, change and accommodation, receptivity, the Homogeneous Unit Principle, the dynamics of church growth, and the nature of the spiritual warfare—all in the space of 205 pages.

Unfortunately, the book reads as if it had been written from notes taken from classroom lectures and readings which were only partially understood. The ideas are poorly integrated, are frequently used in ways which are inappropriate in their new setting in this book, and seldom come together into a coherent whole.

Throughout the book the concern is with theory, with wording theories as correctly as possible; but the theories all seem to exist in a world of logical constructs which is far from the real world of people in which a missionary actually lives and works. In this book theory exists without understanding the complexity of what really happens when human beings interact in such a way that the gospel is shared. It is difficult to imagine an audience for which this book will be helpful.

In addition the book is marred throughout by the use of male non-inclusive language, a startling lack of sensitivity in communication for a book concerned about the sharing of good news.

The Image of Christianity in Japan: A Survey. By James P. Colligan, editor of the English version. Tokyo: Institute of Christian Culture, Sophia University, 1980, 152 pp., $9.50 (pb)

Reviewed by Robert L. Ramseyer

The Image of Christianity in Japan is the record of an attempt to be scientific about finding out how people in Japan feel about Christianity. The Japan Market Research Bureau of J. Walter Thompson Company was called on to carry out lengthy interviews with 595 people in three metropolitan centers. The results are included here under twenty-four headings along with three interpretive essays.

The survey shows that respondents were well aware of the Christian church and in general favorably disposed toward it. They thought of Christianity as being foreign, but also as bright, active, modern, intellectual, and moral. The survey provides a wealth of material for anyone concerned with sharing the gospel in Japan. For example, the proportion of Christian believers was less among those who had attended Christian schools than in the sample as a whole. Respondents had negative feelings about being approached directly by those who would share the Christian faith either door-to-door or on the street.

The book also includes an excellent historical review by Kiyoko Takeda which describes the ways in which key Japanese people have encountered the Christian faith, accepted it for a time in some fashion, and then moved on.

> *They stepped out of the line which can be drawn by the tension between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, seeking a new frontier in the dialogue between Christianity and Japanese values. They continued willingly to grapple with issues raised by Christianity concerning God, man, society, and history—issues of a clearly different sort from those posed by the value system of the traditional Japanese ethos. In their persistent pursuit of such questions, in the Japanese intellectual milieu, they were not afraid to cross over the boundaries set by Christian orthodoxy. They may have appeared to be apostates, but they were also creative intellectuals and social beings willing to explore new frontiers of Christian values in the non-Christian world. As they opened new borderlands that were inaccessible to Christians within the church, they provided new insights into the methods and approaches through which the traditional Japanese ethos might be penetrated and reformed from within, and a truly effective dialogue initiated between the in-*

digenous ethos of Japan and Christianity. Theirs was an apostasy that ultimately pointed out new directions for Japanese thought (pp. 20-21).

Robert L. Ramseyer is Director of the Mission Training Center and Professor of Missions and Anthropology at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. He served in Japan with the General Conference Mennonite Church Commission on Overseas Missions, 1954-72, 1978-82.

The Tears of Lady Meng: A Parable of People's Political Theology. By C. S. Song. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1982, 80 pp., $4.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Winifred N. Beechy

A well-known folktale from ancient China becomes the framework for this parable of people's political power by C. S. Song, Christian theologian from Taiwan. The deceptively charming legend of the faithful Lady Meng dutifully seeking the bones of her husband, a victim of the human cost of the Great Wall of China—the epitome of tyrannical rulers' insatiable greed for national security more than two thousand years ago, proves all too relevant to the world's problems today.

The author draws theological and political insights from Lady Meng's struggle with the invincible and idolatrous power, armed only with her vulnerable weakness, heartfelt tears, compassionate love, and the assurance of truth which she was not afraid to speak.

Song seems to reject the political theology of liberation which promotes violence and revolution, and opts instead for one grounded in suffering. The moral, spiritual, and divine power of love turns the weak into strong and the strong into weak. At the heart of this people's-power ethic is the encounter with truth, which confronts the powerful and arrogant, dispelling the cover-ups and lies of the public media.

This truth which "sets us free" sometimes leads to death, as in the case of Jesus. But the cross releases the power of life—resurrection. People's political theology is carried forward by this power which awakens exploited and humiliated people to challenge the power of death with the power of resurrection.

Tears, love, and truth are offered as weapons against the naked sword, against nuclear weapons, and against the idolatry of nations who worship at the altar of national security and of greed and power. While Song addresses himself primarily to Third World peoples, he shows penetrating insight into the people's theology of First World nations as well. All who are concerned about conditions in the world today and who are opposed to violence and injustice find this slim volume well worth reading.

Winifred N. Beechy served as Coordinator of Peace and Social Concerns for the Mennonite Church. She wrote The New China *(Herald Press, 1982).*

Ed Taylor: Father of Migrant Missions. By Lou Heath. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982, $5.95.

Hattie Gardner: Determined Adventurer. By Judy Latham. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982, $4.95.

The Caudills: Courageous Missionaries. By Tom McMinn. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982, $4.95.

The Two Nichols: Spent for Missions. By Jester Summers. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982, $4.95.

Reviewed by Barbara C. Smucker

All of these books appear in the "Meet the Missionary Series," designed for Baptist grade school children. The series presents Baptist missionary heroes in an attractive and up-to-date manner.

The stories are about Ed and Alberta Taylor among migrant workers in Oklahoma, Hattie Gardner in Nigeria, Herbert and Marjorie (Jacob) Caudill in Cuba, and Buford and Mary Francis (Hodges) Nichols in China and Indonesia.

The stories show the struggles and achievements of these missionaries in interesting detail. All the books in this series convey the courage and commitment of Southern Baptist missionaries. Their lives were lives of hardship, danger, joy, and victory.

The books are attractively designed and have fine artwork and maps. Their eye-catching colored illustrations by Dick Wahl and Jack Woodson will appeal to young readers. The faces of the missionaries dominate the covers; one small regret is that the cover illustrations have no children.

At times the dialogue in these books is stilted, but on the whole the stories of the missionaries condense accurately and well the lives of these courageous people. Also, some of the factual material might interest the parents but not the young child.

One wonders how these missionaries, having worked and experienced revolutions in various locations around the world, related to the upheaval in race relations during the civil rights movement in the USA, with its special focus in the Deep South. Also, did any Nigerians try to enroll in Southern Baptist colleges and universities?

At times the characters seem unrealistically too good, but these books could be models for other denominations to portray their missionaries in a similar way.

Barbara C. Smucker, Waterloo, Ontario, has written Henry's Red Sea *and* Days of Terror, *books about Russian Mennonite migration for youth.*

Bible of the Oppressed. By Elsa Tamez; translated from Spanish by Matthew J. O'Connell. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1982, 88 pp., $5.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Allen R. Guenther

Elsa Tamez, writing from within the Latin American political and economic context, searches the Old Testament vocabulary of oppression to discover its message for the poor and the powerless. She analyzes nine Hebrew terms and discovers that they point to oppression as exploitation and death, both physical and psychological, and as discrimination and degradation. The oppressors are the wealthy and powerful. In the Latin American context that translates into the ruling elite, large landholders, and multinational corporations.

The good news of liberation is a concern for the oppressed. This concern must be expressed

in bringing about freedom and action, an action that is to be realized in the model of Yahweh who crushes the foe and of the judges of Israel who acted with God to free their peoples.

Tamez's conclusions do not hold if one follows a more rigorous methodology in the study of the language of oppression. The primary term for the oppressed/poor *('ani, 'anawim)* undergoes a shift from the locus of sociological poverty (destitution, oppression, disenfranchisement, weakness) to spiritual poverty, a shift traced by Gelin in *The Poor of Yahweh* (1964). Further, Tamez's conclusion that all poverty is the consequence of oppression runs counter to the biblical view of suffering and poverty, as well as to sociological studies.

The contribution of *Bible of the Oppressed* lies in its gathering Old Testament references to oppression, its causes, and human agents. A close reading of Amos, Isaiah 1-5, and the individual lament psalms could accomplish the same purpose.

Allen R. Guenther is Associate Professor of Old Testament at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

War, Peace and the Bible. By J. Carter Swaim. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1982, 144 pp., $6.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Harry Huebner

War, Peace and the Bible endeavors to bring the world of biblical reality together with the present world of militarism, a timely task. It is written for the nonprofessional and has two distinct virtues. First, it bases itself upon respected biblical research without itself being a research project. Consequently, it can make profound statements without becoming tedious. Second, it is able to relate biblical material to the present materialistic situation by speaking biblically about the latter. Often the reverse is done.

I highly recommend this booklet to anyone who is searching for a clear understanding of the biblical perspective on such current issues as disarmament, nuclear war, and military spending.

I want to raise a theological point, however, which Swaim does not discuss explicitly, but builds upon. He begins, as do many biblical scholars addressing the question of war and peace, with the affirmation that Yahweh is a god of war. Of course, the Bible speaks of God as warring for a people, and this should not be ignored. But the Bible also speaks of God as love. The theological task is to develop a way of thinking that brings these two opposing attributes together. Historically, theologians have argued the theological compatibility of war and love. The conclusion has usually been that if they are reconcilable theologically then they should be anthropologically. Hence we have the justification of most wars.

Much serious theological work still needs to be done to develop a meaningful God-language: How can we speak about God with consistent symbols? We have, naturally, some simple alternatives. We can make the God of Jesus normative or the warrior God normative. But both are simplistic and must be rejected as such. Other more viable approaches tend to be philosophically complex. Precisely for this reason the issues must be tackled head-on as an urgent theological philosophical task.

This task does not belong in Swaim's book, addressed as it is to nonprofessionals, but it does belong within the larger discussion of war, peace, and the Bible. In fact, this reviewer would hold it up as the most crucial issue on this subject. If it is done well, we can await a new theological paradigm which will liberate us from the inevitable—albeit perhaps unconscious—thought that, after all, the ultimate wielder of power over history recognizes the all-too-frequent unworkability of the way of peace expected of people.

Once we are liberated from the misconception of the warlike nature of God, perhaps the demonic power of this ideology which currently enslaves us, coercing us to believe that really important changes and effective political strategies demand powerful violent means, can be transformed into a belief in the powerfulness of nonviolence for the real world of societies and politics. Perhaps Christians can still believe that Jesus really is from God, and he simultaneously discloses God's true nonviolent nature as well as the true meaning of the earth.

Harry Huebner has served with Mennonite Central Committee in the West Bank since 1981.

Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom. By Orlando E. Costas. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1982, 256 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Peter J. Kroeker

Orlando Costas is to be congratulated for bringing this concise portrayal of the historic roots of liberation theologies together with a descriptive and analytical review of their current dynamics. The book is particularly interesting and helpful as a mirror for missionaries from the First World to see how we are perceived in the cultures of poverty, injustice, and oppression. It helps us to understand the cultural filters and syncretistic interpretations which have permeated Christianity in the First World and influenced our presentation of Christ and salvation in our outreach to people in the Third World.

But Costas goes beyond descriptive analyses of injustices in the Third World to discuss the need for Third World missionaries to minister in the First World. He portrays the sinfulness of Christianity in the First World rather critically. Sometimes it hurts, but his analyses and challenges should not be dismissed or ignored.

Not all evangelicals will agree with the biblical interpretations Costas presents as basic to his theology. I take issue with his view, if I understand it correctly, that Christ is all people (p. 13). Is there more than one Christ, and did he not come into this world for **all** people? Or I wonder about his statement that "every movement that dignifies human life, that promotes equitable economic relations, and that encourages solidarity among individuals and peoples can be said to be, therefore, a manifestation (though partial) of the saving power of the gospel" (p. 30). In my opinion, some proponents of atheistic and/or humanistic approaches to promote equitable economic relations deny the power of the gospel. How can they be a manifestation of something which they deny?

Despite these questions, which may reflect problems in semantics, I heartily recommend this book to those Christians who are interested in cross-cultural expression of their faith, whether it be at home or in another country, and to those who are willing to accept a critical look at their own expressions of Christianity.

Peter J. Kroeker is a visiting professor at Fresno (California) Pacific College. He has served as a consultant for international development and as a missionary in Zaire with Mennonite Brethren Board of Mission/Service.

Editorial

A recent letter to the editor of a church magazine attacked those who emphasize the "gospel of peace." The writer insisted that Jesus, not peace, is at the heart of the gospel.

This is not a new criticism; the debate is an old one. But what is the real issue? Is it perhaps ideology rather than theology? Whether viewed theologically or ideologically, the issues are whether the Christian message has any sociopolitical relevance and the means by which that relevance is to be expressed.

One side argues that these matters are strictly personal and should be kept on the *Peace with God* level. This position takes a friendly view toward the Western democracies and considers criticism of such governments disloyal. In this view religion forms an integral part of the bulwark of Western civilization and should play the role of friendly ally rather than critic.

On the other side are those who are generally pessimistic concerning the virtue of all governments. They find in the Christian message the basis for criticizing all human institutions, including governments, for their abuses of power and privilege. They view governments, as enemies of the people, to be treated with suspicion.

In Ephesians 2:11-22—a passage many regard as a key summary of the work of Jesus Christ—Paul states that "he [Christ] is our peace." From the context one gains a picture of concreteness: A thorough-going transformation has produced new relationships as a visible testimony of God's power before an unbelieving world.

The apostle Paul gives no hint of an overt political or social strategy at work. The ministry of the suffering servant, Jesus, supersedes all that. It is based on a new theocentric vision.

Both positions identified above fall under the judgment of this theocentric vision. If the gospel has no sociopolitical relevance, it is merely an escapism. If the gospel is treated as essentially sociopolitical, it forfeits its transcendent power and claims.

The Radical Reformation of the sixteenth century clung to an alternative position, one that called for the church to be a genuinely missionary people. Mennonite historian C. J. Dyck has characterized this position as follows:

> *It is clear that the missionary response was for the Anabaptists the primary alternative to the methods of the magisterial reformers and that the believers' church was an attractive alternative to the* **corpus Christianum.** *Not coercion but persuasion, not primary emphasis on reforming society but on establishing a new society, not individualistic or sacramental salvation but personal experience and corporate faith were their alternatives.*

Such a position demands deep caring about the welfare of society. It calls for costly involvement in the suffering of the world. But it places a heavy demand on the church to demonstrate before the world a new way of life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit as an expression of the kingdom of God present in a people. It rejects both the privatistic strategy and the attempt to have the church take over the sociopolitical machinery of society.

It continues to be a matter of more than passing interest to me that most people think about this question of "the church in the world" in different ways, depending on whether it is in a "missionary" (read foreign) or domestic context. When crises occur in another country, I am frequently asked, "How will this emergency affect the work of the missionaries?" Seldom, if ever, do I hear that same question raised with reference to a similar domestic happening. But the church and its representatives should always stand in a position of tension with the sociopolitical order. This was the experience of the primitive church (in Acts) and of all the faithful throughout church history.—Wilbert R. Shenk

POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

September 1983
Volume 11 Number 3

MISSION FOCUS

Mission: Salt, Light, and Covenant Law

JOHN DRIVER

The double parable of salt and light in Matthew 5:13-16 is essential to understanding the mission of God's people as Jesus perceived it. To grasp the impact of its message this passage must be viewed in immediate context: in light of what precedes (the Beatitudes, 5:3-11) and of what follows (Jesus' attitude toward God's covenant law, 5:17-20).

Exclusive use of plural pronouns in this paragraph shows that the images of salt and light are used in an essentially collective sense. They reflect the kind of community which is described by the Beatitudes and which lives and proclaims a message characterized by the values summarized with singular clarity in the Sermon on the Mount. Only a restored community will be truly missionary in a way which corresponds to Jesus' vision for the mission of God's people.

The paragraph which contains Jesus' statement of his relationship to covenant law (5:17-20) is generally perceived as an introduction to his call to the practice of a higher righteousness which follows (5:21-48). However, this juxtaposition of missionary images and attitude toward the law can hardly be coincidental. It also contributes to our understanding of the central paragraph containing the images of salt and light.

According to the prophetic vision, the missionary message of God's restored people is his law which goes forth out of Zion (Is. 2:3; Mic. 4:2). Similarly, the missionary proclamation of the messianic community is not an amorphous, mystical message, but one with concrete ethical substance. It is not a message which merely helps us to feel better about ourselves, although this may well be one of its important side effects. It is the announcement of a kingdom which has come: a kingdom in which the rule of God is recognized; a kingdom in which Jesus is already worshiped and obeyed as Lord; a kingdom in which interpersonal relationships correspond to God's covenant intention for his people; a kingdom which will one day be manifested in all of its glory.

Radical missionary visibility

The fundamental relationship of the images of salt and light to the Beatitudes is highlighted by the repeated use of the plural pronoun *you* in Matthew 5. It is presupposed in each of the Beatitudes ("Blessed are [you] poor in spirit") but is made specific only in the last one. The plural pronoun *you* appears six times in verses 11 and 12 and is the point of departure for introducing the salt and light images in the verses which follow. In fact the use of *you* is especially emphatic, as if Jesus had said, "It is *you*, the messianic community of beatitude; *you* who therefore suffer persecution at the hands of evildoers; it is precisely *you*. *You* are the salt of the earth . . . *You* are the light of the world."

This juxtapositon of suffering and witness should come as no surprise. In the New Testament the same term is applied to both martyr and witness. Suffering and testimony of God's people are, in reality, two sides of the same coin. A suffering messianic community, gathered by its suffering Lord, is salt and light in the world.

The principal verbs in verses 13 and 14 are in the indicative mood rather than in the imperative, a fact often overlooked. Jesus does not command his disciples to be salt and light. He simply declares that this suffering community described by the Beatitudes is, by nature of the messianic mission, salt and light. No techniques for becoming salt and light exist independently of the spiritual values and resources of the kingdom described in the Sermon on the Mount.

If, by God's grace, we are the kind of community described by the Beatitudes, and if, in the power of his Spirit, we live the life described in the Sermon on the Mount, then our presence and proclamation will carry kingdom content. It will season and purify and enlighten relationships within human society.

However, if we are not this kind of community and our works do not really correspond to the teachings of Jesus, then no matter how hard we try, our saltiness will become insipid and worthless and the light will grow clouded and dim.

With the image of light Jesus underscores the missionary visibility of God's people: "A city set on a hill cannot be hid." In this image Jesus identifies himself with an ancient prophetic vision of restoration and witness. The servant of Yahweh will be "a light to the nations" (Is. 42:6; 49:6), and God's saving mission to the nations will be carried out through the restoration of his people according to his covenant intention. According to the prophetic vision, "the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains . . . and all the nations shall flow to it" (Is. 2:1-4; Mic. 4:1-4; cf. Zech. 8:20, 22).

In line with this vision Jesus described how the messianic community would be different and how, like a mountaintop city which others will see, it will be a powerful attraction. "Men will see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in

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heaven" (Mt. 5:16). The restoration of a people who walk in the paths of the Lord and the fulfillment of the life envisioned in the law and the prophets will be a magnet which attracts the peoples of the earth (Yoder, 1982:9).

Jesus' insistence on the missionary visibility of the messianic community may have been also a response to the strategy of the Essenes of his time (Bonnard, 1976:96). They lived together in communities in the Judean desert with an appealing integrity. They dedicated themselves to a purity of life which was both moral and religious, as they awaited the coming day of the Lord when the reign of Yahweh would be established. But Jesus' words, in line with the prophetic vision of the "mountain of the house of the Lord ... raised above the hills" round about, stand in contrast to the self-centered otherworldliness of the Essenes. The messianic community anticipated the restored life of the new era in a visible way, and it does so "on behalf of the nations."

In short, Jesus saw the missionary task of the people of God as anticipating concretely and visibly the kingdom of God with saving intent. The life and works which correspond to God's saving intention are the clearest testimony that God has intervened in human history in the form of messianic restoration and that his universal reign is thereby inaugurated. So by means of the being and doing of God's restored people, as well as the verbal proclamation of God's reign, are we to be instruments of saving activity in the world.

The idea that essentially only two alternatives are open to the people of God in our life and mission in the world—conform to the values which characterize society because we need to be in the world in order to give our witness, or maintain a different style of life by withdrawing from the world and living in geographic or spiritual isolation—is false. The alternative which Jesus envisioned for his community is life characterized by the beatitude of restored communion both with others and God. We are called to live and witness radically under God's reign in the midst of the world.

Covenant law determines life and mission

Matthew 5:17-20 shows an intimate relationship between covenant law—God's gracious intention for the life of his people—and the mission of Messiah and his community. We have already noted the prophetic vision upon which Jesus based his understanding of mission. An essential aspect of this vision has to do with the function of law in relation to the mission of God's people. The prophets caught a glimpse of how God would teach his ways to all, including the Gentiles; of how the "law ... of the Lord" would lead to the establishment of shalom among the peoples of the earth (Is. 2:3-4; Mic. 4:2-3). We do well to recall that in the Hebrew mind Torah did not so much mean rules, but rather guidance or instruction. According to the prophetic vision, God's covenant law plays a fundamental role in God's restored missionary community.

As a result of our Protestant heritage via Pietism and Revival movements, we Evangelicals have a difficult time seeing evangelism as having anything to do with biblical law. In fact we have generally viewed law in terms of legalism and conceived of it as a mortal enemy of true evangelism. And where existentialism has exercised an influence it has simply served to nurture these negative attitudes toward the function of the law.

Jesus, however, rejected the idea that his messianic mission was to lead God's people away from the authentic and legitimate authority of his covenant law over them. On the contrary, God had commissioned him to give fullness to the law and the prophets. As Messiah, Jesus is the new Moses, as the typology in Matthew's Gospel gives us to understand (Jeremías, 1967:867-73). He is the ultimate lawgiver. For Jesus the category of covenant law was as native and congenial as the good news of the kingdom which he proclaimed.

Jesus understood God's law as the expression of his salvific intention for the life of his people. In reality, Jesus offered his teachings, not as a substitute for, but as the culmination, or full flowering of, God's covenant intention. From the examples which follow in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:21-48) we note that Jesus radicalized the law, in that he gave it its fullest meaning by taking as his point of departure its root in the intention of God. (In this sense we use the term *radical*, from the Latin *radix*, root.)

To judge from the examples listed in Matthew 5:21-48, we may say that Jesus, in reality, took the category of covenant law more seriously than did his Jewish contemporaries. He deepened the common understanding of law by discerning its essential spirit through an appeal to its radical intention. Jesus' activities corresponded to the prophetic vision which looked forward to the last times when there would be an authoritative and definitive interpretation of the law of God (Jer. 31:31ff.;

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MISSION FOCUS (ISSN 0164-4696) is published quarterly at 500 S. Main St., Elkhart, Indiana, by Mennonite Board of Missions. Single copies available without charge. Send correspondence to Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515. Second-class postage paid at Elkhart, Ind., and at additional mailing offices. Lithographed in USA.
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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MISSION FOCUS, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

Ezek. 36:26ff.; Is. 2:3) (Bonnard, 1976:99). Jesus is perceived not as a replacement for, but as the fulfillment of, God's salvific intention for his people once expressed in covenant law.

The challenge included in Matthew 5:20 is directed to the messianic community. However, it is not merely a call to a life which is spiritually motivated in contrast to the legalism which characterized the scribes and Pharisees. In a fundamental sense this passage also critiques contemporary Jewish missionary practice. Jesus did not denounce the scribes and Pharisees because they lacked missionary zeal, while his followers were zealous missioners. Nor did Jesus condemn their legalism, in contrast to the spirit which characterizes the messianic community. In what may appear to Evangelicals to be a remarkable reversal of roles, Jesus was condemning the lack of moral content in the Jewish mission. For missionary reasons, as well as for their own salvation, the righteousness of the messianic community must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees.

The missionary activity of first-century Judaism was truly remarkable in its scope as well as reasonably successful. The number of proselytes and God-fearers grew, particularly among the Jews of the dispersion. One suggestion is that conversion to Judaism was one of three principal reasons why the number of Jews living in the diaspora was so high (Hegermann, 1973:307-308). (The two other reasons adduced are that Jewish families were large and in a favorable social situation. An estimate is that some four to six million Jews were living in the diaspora, while fewer than two million Jews lived in Palestine in the first century.)

The missionary activity of Judaism was notable in a number of ways.

1. They proclaimed the one true God whose worship was absolutely incompatible with the many forms of pagan cult which abounded in the empire.

2. They proclaimed what they considered to be the true path to spirituality through obedience to the precepts of God's law, a thing which was highly scandalous to enlightened pagans of the period.

3. They shared the conviction that hope for humankind was to be found in faithful worship of the one true God and zealous observance of his law.

In light of this seemingly laudable missionary activity Jesus' scathing condemnation is all the more remarkable. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves" (Mt. 23:15).

To judge from the evidence which we find in Matthew's Gospel, among the various reasons for this energetic denunciation must have been at least two principal ones. First of all, among these missioners was an absence of an authentic practice of the piety which they preached. Jesus had an incisive comment to make about this fact. "So practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice" (Mt. 23:3).

The second was their apparently well-intentioned concern for the practical relevance of the law which led them to reformulate covenant precepts with a view to making their practice more accessible to the people of their time. Examples of this practice can be seen in provision for contributing funds for religious purposes rather than using them for support of elderly parents as the law intended (Mk. 7:9-13); liberal provisions for divorce and remarriage which responded more to the exigencies of the social situation than to God's covenant intention (Mk. 10:2-9); and fine distinctions which were made to determine liability in swearing of oaths while covenant law was intended to protect relationships of faithfulness and veracity among God's people (Mt. 23:16-22).

So the difference between the messianic mission and the rabbinic mission in the first century was not delineated in terms of gospel and law, as traditional Protestant interpretation would have us believe. Rather the question was how the role of covenant law was to be taken in determining the life and mission of God's people. It had to do with the fundamental matter of discerning its radical intention and, having done this, taking it with utter seriousness.

The rabbinic method for interpreting and applying Mosaic covenant provisions was the opposite of that which Jesus used. While the causistic interpretations of the scribes and Pharisees were aimed at making their observance more generally accessible, Jesus insisted on radicalizing covenant precepts in terms of God's true intention by going deeper into the salvific will of God as he discerned it. Jesus' condemnation of the rabbinic mission was not aimed at their works, as such, but rather at their tragic lack of authentic moral seriousness.

The missionary task: call to renewal and making disciples

The specter of the traditional salvation-by-works versus salvation-by-faith debate need not haunt us here. The ethical seriousness which Jesus insisted on presupposes, in the context in Matthew's Gospel, God's gracious forgiving love and the renewing power of his Holy Spirit. In their setting in the Sermon on the Mount the figures of salt and light tell us that only that community which incarnates the true spirit and values of the kingdom of God is in a position to proclaim with any degree of credibility the gospel of the kingdom.

According to Jesus, the good works which characterize the messianic community are essential to the communication of the gospel in a way which brings glory to God (Mt. 5:16). For missionary reasons Jesus denounced the Pharisaic tendency to relax the commandments which reflected God's intention for the life of his people; he insisted that the righteousness of kingdom missionaries must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees if they or their converts expect to enter the kingdom of heaven.

The spiritual legacy of the Protestant Reformation with its recovery of a more biblical vision of salvation by grace has served as a necessary corrective to the ancient and pernicious idea of salvation by works. An important part of the gospel message is the good news that God receives repentant sinners, just as we are, and forgives us out of love, rather than in response to any personal merit. However, the typical Protestant version of this gospel of salvation by faith without works is not fully adequate when measured from Jesus' perspective.

As Evangelical Christians, we are quick to proclaim that we live by grace and not by law. Furthermore, we believe that the salvation offered by the new covenant is far superior to that which was experienced by God's people under the Mosaic covenant. But when we compare the concrete expressions of this salvation which characterizes our life and witness with the life of beatitude and obedience to covenant law, as this was radicalized by Jesus in the messianic community, we must confess that something has gone awry. Is it possible that the tendency to stress almost unilaterally in our missionary message the Protestant doctrine of salvation by faith alone has somehow severed the vital nerve, leaving us with a message which is more mystical than real?

The concrete social substance of salvation among God's people under the old covenant is described in the Decalogue, the sabbatical and jubilee provisions, and the messages of the prophets. However, since the incarnation, salvation in the new covenant is superior to that experienced under the old for two principal reasons: Messiah has come, and his spirit indwells his

community. Messianic salvation, which Jesus announced in terms of jubilee liberation and restoration (Lk. 4:18-19), is therefore richer, both in moral content and spiritual motivation, than the experience of salvation under the old covenant.

However, when we look at the missionary history of the Christian church we observe, among new churches as well as the sending congregations, that the concrete experience of salvation (in terms of righteousness, shalom, communion) has generally been poorer than that which is set forth in the provisions of the old covenant. This, of course, places the church and its missionary enterprise more in line with the scribes and Pharisees of first-century Judaism in their life and mission, than with the restored community of Messiah described in the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus' use of the missionary images of salt and light in the context of the Beatitudes and the relationship of the messianic community to covenant law call for taking a new and more penetrating look at the missionary enterprise as it is being carried out by Evangelicals in our time. As Jesus reminds us in Matthew's Gospel, the missionary task calls for both the renewal of the church and making disciples of all nations.

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Why Don't More Japanese Become Christians?

CHOSEI (KIYOSHI) KABIRA

A survey on "The Religious Consciousness of Japanese" was conducted by Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK, Japan Broadcasting Corporation) in November 1981 in urban and rural areas of Japan. The findings may be helpful in answering the question, Why don't more Japanese become Christians?

The survey shows that one third of Japanese people believe in some definite religion. Those who have a faith are mostly older people who live in towns and small cities. The younger people are mostly indifferent toward religion. Seventy percent of the people affirmed that they should have a religion or that they had better have a religion, while only one percent said there should be no religion. The older people get, the more affirmative they become. Sixty-six percent agreed that "religion provides spiritual support and comfort which are vital for human beings to live." Forty-five percent said that religion teaches morality which the society requires. Fifty percent of people asked replied that faith is necessary.

The largest religious group in Japan is Buddhism (27%), followed by Shintoism (3%) and Christianity (2%). Christians number slightly more women than men and are proportionally more college educated than other religions.

Eight times as many people expressed friendliness or familiarity with Christianity as the number of self-claimed Christians, especially among youth. More than 60 percent showed friendliness toward Buddhism, 20 percent toward Shintoism, and more than 20 percent toward no religion.

More than 20 percent stated their firm belief in a God of some kind; another 15 percent think god(s) might exist. A high percentage of teenagers expressed firm belief. As for images of religion, younger people listed restriction, dark, old-fashioned, have nothing to do with it; older people listed free, bright, a little old-fashioned, intimate. A third of the people associated religion with the word *serene.*

About 60 percent of the people feel deep spiritual ties with ancestors, the highest among older people. Forty-five percent have both Shinto home shrines *(kamidana)* and Buddhist altars *(butsudan)* where the ancestors' posthumous tablets are placed; 15 percent have only shrines; 16 percent have only altars.

Seventy-three percent of the people said that they are convinced that science is *not* all mighty. Furthermore, more than 75 percent think that religion has power which could surpass science; 27 percent think religion has power to make things occur which science says is impossible.

Eighty percent recognize that many people are concerned only about themselves and are indifferent toward others. The same number think that monetary and material matters are valued more and spiritual wholesomeness is neglected. Though they showed some critical view on the current social situation in Japan, nearly 60 percent think that private life should not be sacrificed, even if this may contribute to the welfare and well-being of society and the nation. Only older men and women said they thought social and national priorities should be considered over private interests.

A beginning answer

To answer the question why more Japanese don't become Christians, we begin simply by stating four words: intellectualism, urbanism, foreignness, and individualism.

The choice of the first three words is influenced by Professor Yasuo Furuya of International Christian University who lectured at Shibuya Baptist Church in June 1978 on "Church and Society in Japan." Several publications of past Hayama Conferences and past issues of the *Japan Christian Quarterly* have shown that many good answers to this question have been studied and clearly stated. Let's explore those further.

Intellectualism

Many writers have suggested that intellectualism is a barrier to Japanese becoming Christians. An example of this is that when K. F. A. Gutzlaff translated the Gospel of John into

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Japanese with the aid of Japanese fishermen from a wrecked ship, it was indeed in commoners' Japanese, using phonetic *katakana* characters. The translation was published in Singapore in 1837, but was never adopted officially by the churches upon the lifting of the ban against Christianity in 1837.

Christianity then attracted Japanese intellectuals as a source of Western learning in the mood of civilization and enlightenment and "leaving Asia and entering Europe," though these people were not necessarily interested in learning Christianity per se. Later, however, many of these people were caught by the esteemed personalities of their Christian teachers (missionaries) who witnessed to their belief in Jesus Christ in their daily conduct. The fact was that those students happened to be the sons of samurai who were not happy with the new Meiji government. Some of those were such people as Masahisa Uemura, Kanzo Uchimura, and Inazo Nitobe. (Saburo Kiuchi, p. 168).

Those Christians were later grouped as the Yokohama, Sapporo, and Kumamoto "bands" and became instrumental in producing the first official Japanese Bible in 1875 which was the Gospel of Luke. The style of the entire New Testament of 1880 was unavoidably in intellectual literary form which is now called *bungo-tai*. Many Chinese characters, *kanji*, were used.

Since then Christianity in Japan has always been identified with the intellectual class. This is confirmed in the 1981 NHK survey:

> *In the case of Christianity (2%) there are not many differences among believers according to their ages, but there are slightly more women than men. As far as academic levels are concerned the proportion of college graduates is high among Christians. Buddhism which occupies the highest ratio (27%) is found more among women, aged, urban and small-town dwellers, and those with low education. Shinto (3%) believers are mostly among those who are independent business operators in small towns and cities* (NHK, 1982:6).

Urbanism

Regarding urbanism, I can only agree with the view expressed in the 1982 summer issue of *The Japanese Christian Quarterly* by Kishida Kaoru, pastor of Zion Kamata Church:

> *Already by the first year of the Meiji Era (1868) Christianity was thought to have a great many believers from the intellectual class, but this seemed to occur because most churches were in cities and it was easy for students to convert. As a result urban missions came to be representative. Location and historical background determined the advantages and disadvantages for evangelism. This meant that it was very disadvantageous to evangelize in inconvenient and culturally underdeveloped areas where population was being depleted of their working force and where Shinto and Buddhism were strong. On the other hand the large cities with their more convenient transportation were made open to new cultural influences. Thus urban missions were useful for the conditions of the intellectual class, but this became an obstacle for the infiltration of the gospel into the general public* (1982:153-54).

Foreignness

A third answer to the question of why more Japanese don't become Christians is the factor of foreignness. This is apparently the most widely discussed characteristic of Christianity in Japan. It seems that Christianity has not yet become a national or indigenous religion in Japan even after 120 years of evangelism.

Dr. Kiyoko Cho Takeda describes clearly this historical background:

> *Because Christianity came to Japan from the West, Christians in Japan particularly in the Meiji period (1868-1912) were often called* batakusai *(smelling of butter), an odor associated with Westerners. The way of gathering, the way of worship, the way of prayer, the way of Christian life, apologetics, and theology—all were influenced by missionaries and by Western cultural and intellectual roots, and the result was an image of Westernization in Japanese Christianity that has been a sort of stumbling block* (1978:6).

This phenomenon was caused not only by the missionaries, but also by Japanese pastors who followed the teachings and training of Western theology and evangelistic methods. An example of which many Japanese Christians complain is the tendency of many Japanese pastors to quote Western thinkers such as Barth, Tillich, and Bonhoeffer and to ignore what Uemura or Uchimura or Nitobe preached in the past or how our Japanese forebears lived.

It is worthwhile to note the big question of Dickson Karuo Yagi at the 1982 Hayama Conference:

> *The big question, then, is not the foreignness of Western Christianity to the Japanese mentality, but (1) the legitimacy of theologizing in any human language (culture) at all, and (2) the legitimacy of the Western brand of the Christian faith. Since Jesus Christ is too big to be contained in the Jewish conception alone, he burst forth into Greek philosophical terminology—the basis for Western theological formulations.... This being the case, who is to complain if Christ should now burst the bonds of Western culture and take on Japanese dress?*

Are our churches helping these bonds to be broken? Could Japanese Christians and church leaders seriously consider adopting some conventional forms of Japanese verbal presentations in such popular comedy and storytelling styles as *kodan, rokyoku,* and *rakugo*? Could Japanese hymnbooks include the Japanese music styles of *minyo, enka,* and even *kouta* to become familiar forms of spreading the gospel in Japan? We have so far been busy following and adapting too many Western Christian traditions. We have many possibilities for more Japanese to become Christians in the future if Christian churches become more Japanese. The NHK survey provides some valuable data to develop evangelistic strategies for churches in Japan.

Individualism

Individualism may be the most important reason why more Japanese are not becoming Christians. In comparison with Shintoism and Buddhism, Christianity appears to be an extremely personal and individualistic religion.

The Bible teaches in Psalm 27:10 and Matthew 10:21, 35-36 that believers must be ready for separation from their father and mother to pursue faith. "My father and mother may abandon me, but the Lord will take care of me" (Ps. 27:10). "Men will hand over their own brothers to be put to death, and fathers will do the same to their children; children will turn against their parents and have them put to death" (Mt. 10:21). "I came to set sons against their fathers, daughters against their mothers, daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law; a man's worst enemies will be the members of his own family" (Mt. 10:35-36, TEV).

A commonly heard criticism of Christianity in Japan is that it is anti-family, anti-ancestor worship, and anti-communal observance. In the early evangelism in my home island of Okinawa, a pastor was reported to have said that the family ancestral tablets *(ihai)* should be burnt without any consideration of leaving the family records. We may have many views concerning the Japanese *butsudan* (Buddhist altar) and *kami-*

dana (Shinto home shrine), but I raise this point to show that Christianity seemed in this case to be pitting the individual against family.

The failure of many churches to deal positively with the matter of the *butsudan* or *kamidana* may make it difficult for Japanese to enter into the Christian faith. Why doesn't every Christian home in Japan have a Christian *seidan* (holy altar)? The church should indeed look for the personal salvation of individuals, but this does not mean that the church cannot be involved in its members' family and social affairs. The definition of a healthy church may be a church where members could freely bring their joys, sorrows, troubles, despairs, and every human incident for sharing and comfort, as in a family.

Implanting and indigenization seem to have been two key words for study and discussion of the Hayama Seminars. My naive question is, how deeply have we looked into the soil of Japan in terms of the rhythm of life, the traditions and observances which may be useful and worthy of consideration for adopting into the church activities? For example, the observance of Christmas came into being at the timing of the Roman feast of Natalis Solis Invicti (Milward, 1982).

When we look deeply into Japanese life, we may see why Japanese do not easily become Christian. According to the NHK survey, 80 percent of Japanese people agree that their livelihood in the past was materially poor but was affluent at heart. This is reflected now in that Japanese today are revaluing customs and traditions peculiar to Japan once again, though there may be some danger of becoming nationalistic in the sense of "Japan as Number One." I can only conclude that for many Japanese to become Christian, it may be necessary to work strongly on softening the factor of individualism in the church and strengthening the family and community factors.

Contextualization in Japan

Since 12 percent of the people in the NHK survey expressed their intimacy or friendliness toward Christianity, there is still a great possibility of evangelism in Japan. Furthermore, we have to reflect on the fact that the largest percentage of those who are interested in Christianity are among the so-called irresponsible teenagers (37% girls, 22% boys) followed by the carefree twenties (17% women, 10% men). These numbers are higher than that of those who expressed friendliness toward Shintoism. The figures are, however, reversed when the people reach the more responsible ages of those who must bear the family and social commitments and responsibilities. What does this fact mean in our church-planting methods?

Our past experience is that fewer and fewer baptized young people stay within the church as they enter college, get employed, get married, and move toward maturity. So the churches have to take measures for those not only in the teens and twenties but also for those of all ages and those near death.

An interesting exercise would be to compile a list of those who have been baptized in all Japan since the end of World War II and to compare that figure with the present total church membership and with the percentage of the population who express friendliness toward Christianity.

Now is the time when Japanese Christians should work together to become a real part of the society with continuing cooperation. The churches are still in the developing stage even while Japan as a nation seems to have fully developed and nationalism is somewhat revived. Perhaps a more important question is, Why don't Japanese Christians stay in the Christian faith and church life?

Finally, here are some ideas for how churches can grow into congregations which are fully involved with the members' family and community activities and traditions.

1. Pastors should be aware of the activities, events, and special days designated in the calendar; if appropriate, these could be taken into consideration in preaching, teaching, and counseling. For example, could all the churches be open at New Years' Eve for *hatsumode?* (More than half the people of Japan make a New Year's visit of *hatsumode* to shrines and temples. It may be labeled a national observance which may have neither theological nor dogmatic significance [NHK, 1982]).

In connection with the point that in order to reach more Japanese for Christ, churches must be less foreign, must work in rural areas also, must be less intellectual, and must be more family and community centered, we must understand the Japanese year. This year is the basis of Japanese lifestyle and rhythm.

The present official Gregorian Christian calendar was adopted and took effect on January 1, 1873, because of the Westernization policy of the new government and for financial reasons. The main financial reason was that the government could not afford to pay civil-service workers for thirteen months a year according to the lunar calendar in use at the time. The lunar calendar *(kyureki)* was closely based on farming activities, and is even now used for day-to-day life.

The old Japanese calendar was adopted from China in AD 861 and was later revised and corrected with solar considerations and has become peculiar to Japan. The three main elements of the calendar continue to influence the lives of Japanese.

Those elements are *jikkan* (the ten celestial stems), *junishi* (the twelve terrestrial signs), and *in-yo gogyo* (the negative and positive five elements). These three elements organize the sexagenary cycle *(eto)* which is applied to years and days.

A year is then divided into twenty-four meteorological points called *sekki*, a unit of fifteen days. The *sekki* is further divided into five-day units.

In addition, the calendar has specific seasonal dates, a number of "selected days," and a commonly known superstitious cycle of six days.

The intricacies of the Japanese calendar are too numerous to review in further detail here.

2. Churches should figure out ways not to have their congregations directly involved in Buddhism or Shintoism at their local temples and shrines and in activities such as festivals, offerings, and carrying the *omikoshi* (portable shrine).

Similar to the activities of conscientious objectors during World War II, church members could play an active role in the community in security, medical emergency help, and functions for the aged and handicapped. The churches could be identified as first-aid stations, disaster centers, and for lost-children's care centers. In this sense, it is vital for the churches to be opened every day for some scheduled activities identified with the community and for daily worship.

3. Churches could encourage their young people to develop associations with other young church members, crossing denominational lines, and the churches could be instrumental in matching young couples by exchanging information on this. Christian homes can be a basis for a growing church.

4. Churches could pay more attention to personal and community events for its members such as *shichi-go-san, seijin-shiki,* and *kanreki.* These significant events which mark stages of life are after all considered to be important in Japanese life.

5. Churches could pay more attention to the dead and to the question of the ancestors of church members by observing the memorial services according to Japanese traditions such as the seventh day, forty-ninth day, one-hundredth day, first year, third year, seventh year, thirteenth year, and thirty-third year.

These services may have Buddhist origins, but they may be used for Christian meanings.

Could young Christian couples keep their Buddhist altars as the ancestral records until they reach the age in life when they are fully responsible for their ancestral affairs, and then they could change it to a Christian home altar where the family lineage records could be stored? Could the family tomb at the temple be kept until the church member is of the age to take full responsibility by moving the tomb out or by paying only for the maintenance and not for any Buddhist ceremonies there? For each church to have a graveyard is always important.

As for *obon*, could churches observe all souls' memorial services with the meaning of remembrance and respect for their ancestors? The church members could be directed to compile and maintain accurate ancestral records. Actually, Buddhist *obon* observances today are often superficial formalities, and people don't have knowledge of the ancestors which they are supposed to be worshiping.

6. Japan has too many small churches which Andar Ismail, an Indonesian pastor, labeled as "pocket-size" and *bonsai* (miniature trees) churches (1982:131). It may therefore be better to have more ecumenical and organized activities in the communities to appeal to the village or city people. Christmas and Easter could be most appropriate.

A Christian talent bureau could be established and publicized among Christians in each community with careful coordination among pastors and lay people. Some may be good at marriage counseling, some at the problems of juveniles, some at educational affairs. Some Christian professionals such as physicians, lawyers, accountants, and architects are not well known among Christians. For Christians to know their counterparts and to know that there are more Christians than their small group to whom they could look for help when needed would be encouraging.

There may be a great advantage in having *gōdō reihai* (mass worship) in each ward of Tokyo and areas of Kansai or prefectural-wide rallies where Christians can receive a sense of mass support and fellowship. Now may also be a time for Christians to be more politically involved, as some seem to think Japan is headed for an era of growing militarism wherein members of the church should be careful to acquire the status of conscientious objector.

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Mission in the Sunbelt

RICK STIFFNEY

Seventy representatives from the Brethren in Christ, Mennonite Brethren, General Conference Mennonite Church, and Mennonite Church met in sunny Houston, Texas, April 11-13, 1983, for a consultation on church-planting strategy for the Sunbelt area of North America. Participants were mission leaders with responsibility in various facets of mission work in congregations, area conferences, and churchwide agencies.

Chester Davidson and Charles Dooley, two consultants from the Houston regional Southern Baptist office, provided stimulating input on demographic and church growth trends in the Sunbelt area and outlined Southern Baptist assumptions and strategies related to church planting. Anthropologists Thomas and Marguarita Melville, an ex-priest and ex-nun with experience in Guatemala, outlined important dynamics in cross-cultural relationships and shared deeply out of their own struggle with Christian faith in the face of violence and repression in Central America. Donald E. Yoder, church planting consultant for the General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite churches, outlined church-planting developments and projects for both denominations. Representatives from the Brethren in Christ and Mennonite Brethren churches presented similar developments.

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Goals

Participants convened at the consultation with the following goals:

1. To broaden participant awareness of the demographic and church-growth trends in the Sunbelt area of the United States.
2. To discuss strategy for church planting and outreach in the Sunbelt area.
3. To deepen sensitivity to the dynamics of cross-cultural ministry.
4. To become aware of recent church-planting developments and five-year projections within the various denominations represented.
5. To project next steps in moving forward in ministry in the Sunbelt area.

Findings

A findings committee, which had been listening and observing during the consultation, shared preliminary findings in the final session. The findings report was developed after this period of

group testing. The following material represents some of the more significant findings from that report as well as identifies issues for continuing work.

1. **The Thirteen Sunbelt states of the United States deserve priority attention** in church-planting and evangelism efforts for the following reasons:

•*Demographic trends*

a. The number of people in the Sunbelt area is rapidly increasing. The Sunbelt of the United States no longer represents the Bible Belt of the United States, and is rapidly becoming a population of the unchurched.

b. Human needs of all kinds are multiplying along with the population, calling for the church's unique witness to justice and response to human need. In 1980 six of the nation's ten poorest cities greater than 100,000 in population were in the South. The Sunbelt boom has not had lasting effect.

c. The population in the Sunbelt is highly mobile. Relocation in the life of a person is a time for personal reassessment and often results in an openness to change or spiritual growth. The time is ripe for interaction with such people who may be looking for a deeper spiritual anchorage in life.

d. Ethnic plurality is a given in the Sunbelt which, more than any other area in the United States, is experiencing a rapid influx of persons from many different racial and cultural backgrounds. Needs among new immigrant peoples are many.

•*Limited Anabaptist witness*

Anabaptist witness in the Sunbelt is sparse. Peace-related groups have a unique contribution to make in the face of escalating human need.

•*Limited resources*

Generally, existing congregations and conferences that are part of the Sunbelt area are some of the newest congregations and conferences within respective denominations. They face great opportunity, but have limited resources.

•*Our own mobile people as missioners*

Mennonite and Brethren in Christ persons are part of the general demographic shift. Many are relocating and represent not only people who themselves have need, but also represent missioners who can be enlisted in the outreach and ministry of our churches.

2. **Our denominations need a strategy** in North America. While there are great needs within the Sunbelt of the United States, there are needs throughout Canada and other parts of the United States. Such needs should not be ignored. Any strategy must keep this in focus. While there is significant cooperation between Mennonites and Brethren in Christ on some levels, no mechanism has been developed for planning together a strategy for North America. Cooperation and sharing of resources must be considered in church planting throughout the Sunbelt.

3. **Cross-cultural ministry is complex.** With ethnic plurality a given, leaders in new ministries need training in the dynamics of cross-cultural ministry.

4. **The black population,** the oldest and largest minority group in the United States, is even **proportionately larger in the South.** Past efforts of our respective denominations for ministries with blacks have not been highly successful. Future projections are limited. Hispanic church growth has spurted. Ministries with native Americans have been limited. In general, our denominations have tended to give more attention to new immigrant ministries.

5. **Effective church planting and ministry requires gifted and equipped leadership.** Our denominations all need to give increased attention to the training and equipping of persons for church-planting leadership. New models of training need to be developed that equip people for the tremendous challenges of church planting in an urban world of ethnic diversity.

6. **We must plant churches that are "signs of the kingdom."** Many people throughout North America are seeking fresh understanding of the good news. We need congregations that stand with the poor, work to address injustice, support human and civil rights, and hold up a vision of peacemaking. Creative leadership, fresh thinking about the nature of the church, and careful assessment of the needs and resources of communities in which ministries are secure must be linked if new models are to emerge.

Continuing Issues

Careful study and discernment related to church planting must continue in some of the following areas.

1. Tensions exist between those who adhere to basic principles of homogeneous church growth and those seeking more integrative models of church planting.

2. Tensions exist between those who affirm the importance of research, goal-setting, strategic planning, and evaluation approaches and those who would emphasize less planning with more emphasis on inviting people to obedience and faithfulness regardless of the success or lack thereof of the ministry itself.

3. Opinion is mixed on the appropriateness of teaching simple lifestyle in poorer economic communities. Often as poorer people experience the gospel and share in the church, upward economic mobility follows.

4. Concern continues about issues of dependency/interdependency as it relates to role and responsibilities of sponsoring congregations and agencies for new church-planting work.

5. Opinion varies on the nature of the good news and how it is both framed and communicated in the North American context.

6. Understandings of Christian pacifism and work for justice is a related issue. It is necessary to search together continually for the meanings and implications of the cross as it relates to contemporary issues of justice. For many participants, the North American experience is insulated from the realities of human injustice and violence. We need continually to assess the meanings and implications of the cross. What shape does the love of Christ take in the face of great human injustice and violence in contemporary North America?

Concrete Results

The Sunbelt consultation was strong on ideas, the big picture of North American opportunity, and practical ideas related to church-planting strategy. Participants have incorporated ideas from the consultation into day-to-day work. The consultation was strong in stimulating creative thinking about substantive issues in the continuing agenda.

The consultation was weak in providing adequate time or structures for processing some of these basic issues relative to assumptions about church planting and models for church planting and development. Opinions varied greatly within the group. The consultation provided no general structure for consulting together or reconciling those differences.

Additionally, the consultation was weak in not adequately producing results directly relevant to the conferences and districts who are currently working in the Sunbelt. During the consultation, an ad hoc group of representatives from districts

and conferences working in the Sunbelt met. They outlined concrete needs and suggestions for follow-up in ways that would be genuinely helpful to them. Their work will be helpful to each denomination as follow-up work proceeds. Included among the suggestions were these:

1. To ask all denominational mission boards to put a priority on church planting in the Sunbelt during the next five years.
2. To make resource people available from the denominational centers to the Sunbelt for exposure and congregational development.
3. To affirm the vision of the Afro-American Mennonite Association in its vision for planting and development of black churches in the Sunbelt.
4. To encourage further planning of a consultation on native American ministries.
5. To ask denominational agencies and larger conferences to assist in helping pastors of Sunbelt congregations get sabbaticals.
6. To encourage planning of a second Sunbelt session to provide more occasion for Sunbelt leaders to encourage and support one another.

A stage has been set with the Sunbelt meeting. The needs and opportunities are known to us. Leadership at all levels will need to accept the challenge.

As one participant so aptly said in reflecting on the meeting, "It's harvesttime in the Sunbelt! The need is great. The needs are overwhelming. God of grace, help us. Help us confront the challenge before us. Grant that we may listen to one another, that we would learn to better cooperate together, and to support one another. Grant that we would be signs of your kingdom, here and now."

Understanding Health and Disease in Africa

J. LESTER and LOIS ESHLEMAN

For centuries Euro-Americans have confronted disease with a will and determination to eradicate it. This has been a heritage of resource to modify and correct social and environmental causes of disease. The necessities of climate, the ethic of progress, and the scientific synthesis have resulted in an orderly attack on the maladies of the human body. The success of these achievements has led Western people to believe that they are able to understand their origin, deal capably with the present, and project their destiny apart from God.

Churches, doctors, and nurses have devoted decades to Africa's health needs. This look at the current state of health care in Africa is intended to help plot a meaningful course for the future.

Subsaharan concepts of disease

The vastness of the African continent has swallowed cultures of people and jelled their thinking in isolation from the rest of the world for centuries. Professor Mbiti in an extensive review documents the religious and philosophical wisdom of more than 270 different peoples of Subsaharan Africa (1970:Preface). (In this article the term "African societies," borrowed from Mbiti, will be used rather than "African tribes.")

Many of the concepts and beliefs carried in the thinking of African peoples, though corrupted and distorted through centuries of oral communication, bear a close relation to the Genesis account of creation, the fall of humankind, the plan of redemption, the call of Abraham, the law of Moses, and the coming of Christ. In view of these unmistakable similarities, a striking historical relation of African culture to the original biblical revelation of monotheism seems to exist.

Beliefs of African societies have been described as myths or superstitions in Western terminology, but they represent fact as that which exists in the concepts of these peoples. Factual in this sense, these beliefs must be reckoned with in order to understand their body health and disease. In general, African concepts of the cause of disease seem to be related to deviation in social or personal behavior, which bring penalties from the spirit world (Bonsi, 1982:3-4; Harwood, 1970:38; Mbiti, 1970:81; Kawira, 1983; Swantz, 1967:34).

The deviation, as such, may be a breach of taboo, failure to meet a ritual requirement, an affront to a being in the spirit world, or insulting the "living dead" (Gelfand, 1964:4; Kawira, 1983). The living dead are understood to be the individuals who after physical death are still alive in the memories of those who knew them. When the last person who knew the departed one dies, the former passes out of existence and then becomes completely dead (Bonsi, 1982:3-4). The living dead are believed to appear to surviving members of the family. Great respect for this group is important.

In the event of sickness, the patient must ask, What have I done or not done? Whom have I offended? Which of my ancestors is displeased with me? The Luo have believed that the persistent crying of a newborn baby indicates that the ancestor for whom the child is named is displeased (Kawira, 1983). This

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moment of crisis calls for help. One or more of the following group of therapists may be brought into the diagnostic process and treatment plan.

The traditional **healer** or herbalist uses plants or plant substances, frequently those obtained some distance from the home of the patient. The name of the plant must not be known, and secrecy surrounds the preparation. Women and children especially must not know what is being prepared (Kawira, 1983). Generally this person is a great friend of African society. The bad publicity given to this group by foreign writers has not been justifiable nor helpful (Mbiti, 1970:224).

Diviners are believed to receive mystical revelations from God. Their credibility is to be questioned.

Witches and **sorcerers** are the great enemies of society; they perform antisocial deeds which poison its welfare (Mbiti, 1970:224-25).

Magicians or **wizards** could be added to the list of those lacking credibility.

The **living dead** may be called upon for mediation in sickness, for they are believed to be able to speak the language of the living and the dead (Mbiti, 1970:230).

In a society with no written language other than occasional rock paintings, through time and generations the original revelation of monotheism was lost. Cultural codes of ethics were needed to establish acceptable conduct in society. Mosaics of spirit belief developed. Spirit entrepreneurs such as witches and diviners or unscrupulous traditional healers appeared, taking advantage of the inherent fears of people in distress. In the Subsaharan context, illness and death are the strongest of cultural experiences. The central goal in African life thus becomes the harmonious existence within the codes of society and the living dead.

Closely associated with the disease of the body is the failure of rain—or drought—which results in hunger, malnutrition, and starvation (Mbiti, 1970). Food production has been marginal in many areas of Africa for decades. Lack of understanding of bacterial causes and methods of disease spread—poor sanitation, deficient water supply, poor maternal child care, unrelenting parasitic disease, and inappropriate intimate living with dogs, goats, and sheep—have resulted in a high index of morbidity and mortality. The clan struggles to survive in waves of crisis.

Western medicine in African culture

The traditional medicine man did not need to know anatomy or physiology to practice his art. Even to the present, his knowledge of physiological functions is less than that of Hippocrates. This lack of knowledge left him largely unable to combat effectively malnutrition, cholera, typhus, appendicitis, peritonitis, tuberculosis, or cancer. In these areas of curative therapy Western medicine made its rapid advance. But the traditional doctor knew his patients. He spoke their language and took time to ferret out their fears. He was effective in treating anxiety-based complaints of the body sounding-board.

When the traditional healer discovers that the patient's complaint is chiefly psychiatric or psychosomatic, he requests an animal or substance which is difficult to obtain, such as a rooster with only black feathers, a cow with no hairs other than white, or some substance such as lion's fat (Lyimo, 1983). This may involve the entire family or community in making the search. In this way the entire group is involved in the treatment, which facilitates the patient's recovery.

Western medicine has been an invasive threat to the traditional healer's existence. Fearful of losing his therapeutic grasp, he became more secretive and protective of his knowledge and resources. Failure of Western medicine in many cases of mental illness or subjective illnesses has resulted in the return of many patients to the traditional healer. *The greatest default in the treatment of African disease has been the failure of Western medicine and traditional medicine to recognize each other's strengths and weaknesses.*

We Western health workers understood well the epidemiology of organic disease, but we were ineffective many times in understanding psychosomatic illness of African patients. Our "bag of red pills" did not produce lasting health. The deep taproots of local belief in herbal medicine and witchcraft were not readily disclosed to foreigners. Patients usually kept their use of herbs well hidden (unless they forcefully expelled them at either end of the alimentary tract while being prepared for surgery!). The anxious female patient did not tell of her fears of her husband, his relatives, living-dead ancestors, or other legions of spirits.

Frustrated Western doctors became dogmatic in our battle against traditional medicine, but we did not succeed. The schoolteacher's wife brought her child to the hospital by day and secretly took him out to the village doctor at night. The whole truth of the treatment game came out only long after the death of the child.

Just as we were ill prepared for Africa's traditional medicine environment, so African students going abroad to the West have been poorly trained for their future. The curriculum in the Western medical university provides little if anything to prepare young African doctors for understanding patients in their home villages (Macha, 1983). Such doctors return home to their people as strangers to their culture; too many have not returned at all.

African governments and churches are not receiving their medical graduates with understanding. Doctors' meager salaries, heavily taxed, do not permit living in an inflationary economy. They frequently are not given adequate housing and transportation (Kawira, 1983). Even the chief of a department in a consultant hospital may be dependent on faulty bus transportation to get to the hospital for emergencies! Or a young surgeon being trained in plastic surgery may need to return to the family's farm or trucking business to make a living wage. Those doctors and nurses who are deeply motivated and committed to the medical care of their neighbors are struggling against great odds. How will we be able to help them survive?

Early missionary medicine in Africa was largely devoted to curative medicine, an approach which enabled it to be readily accepted. Hospitals could never provide enough beds in countries with continuing population explosions. Just as preventive medicine began to catch up with needs and understandings, the world economy shattered, and pharmacies and hospital stores became empty chambers.

However, the effects of crumbling world economy have not all been bad. Essential progress in combating wasteful use of materials would not have been forthcoming as quickly, otherwise. In Africa, constant research in economy and the use of alternative materials has become invaluable to the survival of Western medicine.

One might expect a resurgence of traditional medicine in this crisis, but this is not likely because African governments are committed to the systems of Western medicine. Educated Africans accept the "germ theory of disease" and have abandoned the "society deviation theory" of the past. In addition, the cost of research to extract the usable botanicals in Africa and the cost of securing patients seem prohibitive at present, so the use of Western medicine is likely to continue for the foreseeable future (Lyimo, 1983).

Some methods of neo-traditional medicine do exist. An

example is the mixing of an appropriate antibiotic for diarrhea in the traditional spinach juice. The patient recovers from the diarrhea because of the antibiotic but credits the effectiveness to the time-honored traditional medicine (Lyimo, 1983)! Other modern traditional medicine men are concentrating their treatment efforts in counseling in "love winning," stability in jobs, or palm reading for wealth and good fortune. This cult has been borrowed from Asia (Kawira, 1983).

The gospel and Third World healing ministries

At Shirati Hospital where we served in medicine, surgery, as well as evangelism, it was natural on morning rounds to tarry at the bedside of patients. As the short gospel message was translated from KiSwahili into the Kikuria language, the bedside became the pulpit for the entire ward. In regional and consultant hospitals where the surgeon and chaplain each have their individual roles, the same atmosphere of opportunity does not exist. But the wholeness of the patient is no less important today.

In most African societies human existence is understood in terms of the present and the past. The glory of the future of Christian faith is an unbelievable climax to the void of tradition.

The strong cohesive bond of the family is a heritage too valuable to be undermined or lost. As the West shares its legacy of medical care, can it regain from Africa a "paradise lost," the family? In a recent patient experience even Tanzania's eminent prime minister sat continuously by the Masai father's bedside for twenty-four hours when he expected them to be his father's last. The parting paternal blessing cannot be missed.

To the Christian, death is hailed as victory—the goal achieved.

The rise and fall of developing-country governments and ideologies will result in an ebb and flow of demand for health services. Presently the gap between Western health technology and defaulting developing-country resources is widening so rapidly that the bridge of communication is endangered. The effective practice of Western medical care is at **grave risk.** Poverty-restricted governments, although seeking to popularize socialism, cannot afford "free medicine" (Lyimo, 1983).

Donor agencies are now wary of their well-meant gifts being mischanneled. They now are inclined to give only where their trusted representatives will assure that medical supplies reach the patients who need them. "Indeed the donors are longing and looking for a faithful use of funds" (Mohamed Alpha, 1983). Personal greed and administrative corruption have eroded and misappropriated many well-planned programs of international assistance.

The following steps must be considered and implemented if a viable health-care system is to survive in Africa.

1. Research into the scientific content and potential of traditional medicine must continue where possible. Recognition must be given to the types of illness in which traditional medicine has excelled. A type of cooperation must be sought that will bring forth the best in both African and Western schools of treatment. The Christian church seems to be the appropriate agency to initiate this objective (Gimbi 1978:93).

2. Continued economic research must be done in many areas of African health care. This is absolutely essential to provide the maximum which is possible in a malnourished economy. A few examples are:

   a. Solar-powered energy to replace conventional high-cost oil sources, whenever possible

   b. Locally prepared intravenous solutions by nonelectrical energy sources as against importing European or American water

   c. Use of textile-mill cuttings from T-shirts replacing expensive gauze and cotton

   d. Newspaper mixed with other absorbent material for drainage dressings

   e. Magazines and used school notebook paper for wrapping surgical gloves.

3. Prevent introduction of costly automated apparatus for human life support in terminal illness.

4. Provide for more careful screening and sending of medical workers who have kept well in focus the wholeness of the entire human being.

5. Local people must receive training. At Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre we have an integrated Tanzanian and expatriate staff teaching doctors, nurses, and paramedics in the art of both curative and preventive medicine. The experience of Europe and North America is blended into the needs of the Tanzanian village. We seek to inject the perfection of university medicine as far as facilities permit. As experienced missionaries bring their faithfulness, compassion, and integrity into the daily ward rounds, rapport is established with aspiring young Tanzanians. Controlled hard-core economy is the final ingredient that keeps the hospital in operation when many others have ceased to function effectively.

With this vision *a wide door of opportunity will remain open!* Moses said it, and Christ repeated it: "There will always be poor [and sick] people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land [and the developing world] (Deut. 15:11; cf. Mt. 26:11; Mk. 14:7).

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Education for Overseas Mission Audiovisual Resources

A checklist of selected resources available for modest rental through MBCM Audiovisuals, Box 1245, Elkhart,IN 46515 (Phone 219-294-7536, ext. 231).

ASIA

Info India
13-minute film. 1974.

Info Indonesia
18-minute film. 1974.

Info Japan
24-minute film. 1974.

These three films tell the story of how the Mennonite family in India, Indonesia, and Japan sees its life together and its role in relation to the society that surrounds it.

Israel: Partners in Mission
16-minute film. 1978.
Interview with Joe and Elaine Haines serving as Mennonite workers in Israel where they have served both Jews and Arabs. They believe their task is to build bridges of understanding, to try to span the differences in the cultures of the two groups.

Israel: Vision and Reality
80 slides with 27-minute cassette. 1981.
Some 115,000 Christians (mostly Jewish and Arab) now live in this small strip of land which is the home of our spiritual origins. Roy Kreider narrates his own account of the Mennonite community as part of the Christian minority in Israel.

Living Water for Nepal
35-minute film. 1976.
Documents a fascinating glimpse of the little-known country of Nepal. Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Central Committee are partners there with the United Mission to Nepal. Beautiful countryside, intriguing people, with their religion and their patterns of living, along with the ways UMN is assisting.

Something Besides Rice
28-minute film. 1973.
Norma Kehrberg, Rudy Kuyten, and Sadao Ozawa talk about why it is important to be present and to work with others in Nepal, Japan, and the USA. Designed to answer the question, "Why Christian mission today?" the film emphasizes that mission is a two-way relationship.

AFRICA

Good News Upon the Soil of Africa
80 slides with 16-minute cassette. 1976.
An on-the-spot study of religious activity in Ghana, introducing African independent churches. The title comes from a Kenyan folksinger describing African Christianity.

Ivory Coast: New Face of Mission
132 slides with 13-minute cassette. 1983.
Explains the beginnings and current Mennonite work in this West African country with small villages, many cultures, and a large metropolitan capital. Illustrates the work of David and Wilma Shank and James and Jeanette Krabill with African independent churches, with a focus on the Harrist Church—its beliefs, worship, beginnings—among other churches.

Last Grave at Dimbaza
55-minute film. 1975.
Forceful, well photographed documentary describing the oppression of the apartheid system in South Africa. Informative, accurate, and disturbing.

EUROPE

England: Partners in Mission
15-minute film. 1977.
Interview with Alan and Eleanor Kreider, serving as missionaries in England. Even though the country gave the world John Wesley and George Whitfield, presently only five percent of the country's population attend church. Kreiders talk about their attempts to live their Christian faith within the London Mennonite Fellowwhip.

Ireland: Witness Amid War
140 slides with 23-minute cassette. 1981.
The story of Ireland through the eyes of the Mennonite community there. See the vision of Christian love in a country torn apart by 400 years of religious and political wars.

LATIN AMERICA

Brazil: Big Mission in a Big Country
140 slides with 13-minute cassette. 1983.
Tells about Mennonite mission in Brazil by looking at the lives and ministries of a farmer family in northern rural Brazil and a couple in a southern industrial metropolis. Shows how seeds of faith planted by earlier workers have grown into an active, excited, indigenous church.

Brothers and Sisters
18-minute film. In Spanish or English.
Focuses on parallels and relationships of Mennonites South and North in the areas of finance, leadership, mission, nationalism, priorities, and word and deed.

Church Alive
20-minute film. 1971. In Spanish or English.
Looks at the Christian's daily living; at leadership training; at Protestant/Catholic relationships; at spirit worship. The church is alive in Latin America—vital and growing.

On the Move
17-minute film. 1971. In Spanish or English.
Looks at contrasts, problems, growth, changing patterns—and the church as salt and light.

Write Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, for more AV resources interpreting additional facets of international mission.

In review

***Perceptions of Apartheid:* The Churches and Political Change in South Africa.** By Ernie Regher. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, and Kitchener, Ont.: Between the Lines, 1979, 309 pp., $7.95 ($8.95 Canada), (pb)

Reviewed by Irving Hexham

Sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee in 1974, Ernie Regehr spent two years writing and researching in Southern Africa. The resulting book, *Perceptions of Apartheid,* is a useful introduction to both South African history and the growing conflict between church and state in South Africa.

In the first section, Regehr deals with a number of recent events. He begins with the Soweto revolt which is placed in its social context by a discussion of South Africa's racial laws. Against this background he discusses the role of the church in South Africa and recent conflicts between church and the state.

In the second section Regehr gives a short but valuable history of Southern Africa. This section concludes with a discussion of the role of Calvinism in Afrikaner politics and the development of Black Nationalism.

Section three looks in more detail at the relationship between various South African churches and the state from 1960 to the present.

The book ends with a discussion of violence and nonviolence as political options in South Africa. Regehr points out the dilemmas faced by Christians in this situation. He emphasizes the complicated nature of the discussion and the role of violence in maintaining the state. Finally he appeals for Christians in South Africa to opt for a nonviolent solution through a sustained effort to implement Christian principles and justice in South Africa.

The great strength of this book is the large number of facts and figures which Regehr has condensed into a relatively short text. Its major weakness is Regehr's dependence upon English language sources and general lack of sympathy for Afrikaners.

Nevertheless, this is a valuable and useful book which deserves to be widely read. It introduces the problems of the South African situation and focuses the attention of Christians upon one of the most pressing problems today. More importantly it presents North American readers with a large amount of information about the opposition of both black and white Christians in South Africa to apartheid. As a discussion of Christian opposition to the nationalist regime, it is excellent.

Irving Hexham teaches in the Department of Religion at University of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

Faith in a Nuclear Age: A Christian Response to War. By Duane Beachey. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1983, 136 pp., $6.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Erica Mierau

Faith in a Nuclear Age is an easy-reading introduction to the Christian pacifist/peacemaker response to war and violence. In spite of the suggestion in the title, the book does not in fact deal primarily with nuclear warfare issues; its eleven chapters are rather like a series of sermonettes written in a popular cursory style, but with great passion, calling all Christians to take Christ seriously in their practice of peace and justice.

Using the first-person plural pronoun, Beachey openly identifies himself as American and clearly has primarily in mind an American readership that is either uninformed about or unwilling to take seriously a Christian peacemaker position.

The American militarist view is sketched in the first chapter and found wanting. Chapter two is a thumbnail sketch of history from Augustine who authored "the lie that war can establish peace" to the reformers of the sixteenth century whose ideals were very different from their practice. The rest of the book is largely devoted to answering the question, "Why must we [Christians] fight?"

Chapters three and four deal with biblical perspectives on war and peace. The emphasis is always on the teachings of Jesus, including the insistence that the Old Testament be interpreted as Jesus interpreted it: Enemies are to be loved not "in our hearts" but "in concrete and physical ways" (p. 52).

Chapters five to eight constitute a rather strongly worded polemic against any attempt to Christianize warfare. Beachy argues that the so-called "greater good" used to justify war is in the end nothing more noble than the protection of "our own affluence" which, judging by the popular slogan "better dead than red," is even more important than our very lives! A militaristic Christianity is called upon to translate its faith into obedient love for the neighbor rather than fear of the enemy coupled somehow with a vague hope for the rapture somewhere down the road. The author wisely points out that biblical texts such as Romans 13 are not to be read as general universal principles but within the context of a Roman police-state occupation rather than warfare. Besides, submission to the state is one thing; allegiance is quite another.

"The Real Test" of chapter nine is a willingness to "accept death at the hands of an enemy rather than kill him" (p. 107). Beside such idealism the old question, "What if your family were threatened?" fades into insignificance. The tenth chapter deals with the militaristic church's loss of credibility. Christians are not called to be good citizens; they are called to break down by peacemaking means the walls that separate people from people. Chapter eleven is a plea that Christians adopt a lifestyle of peacemaking, including the quitting of occupations and the supporting of those who for conscience' sake have chosen to be unemployed. The gospel of peace will be costly, but it will have integrity and be a genuine witness.

Perhaps Beachey's use of American evangelical language and typical illustrative material—abortion, situation ethics, polygamy, and the Shaefferian polarization between secular society and Christians—is intended to communicate to his readership on their terms, but this reviewer found it counterproductive and at times confusing. For example, if Christians are not to take the sword because the "real battle" is spiritual, then why talk about war at all? Or again, why paraphrase the words of Jesus to Pilate in the fourth Gospel as "I belong to another kingdom" when the text plainly reads, "My kingdom is not of this world," and goes on to explain that it is a kingdom of servants who do not fight (Jn. 18:36), rather than a spiritual kingdom?

The epilogue of this little book is a powerful aftermath scenario featuring two survivors. It illustrates well that the only way to win the nuclear war game is to refuse to play it.

Eric Mierau is an instructor at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba. He previously served as a Bible translation consultant in West Africa and as a teacher with Mennonite Central Committee in Jamaica.

Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism. By John B. Cobb. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982, 156 pp., $8.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Marlin Jeschke

In *Beyond Dialogue,* Claremont School of Theology process theologian John B. Cobb joins the now acceptable and even fashionable enterprise of Christian dialogue with non-Christian faiths. Indeed, he proposes to move beyond what he considers the conventional approach and goal, namely, conversation in order

to become acquainted with another faith but with the still unrelinquished objective of converting people of that faith to Christianity.

True dialogue assumes that the dialogical partner "is worth listening to as well as addressing." If we expect listeners to receive honestly what we as Christians have to offer, we must be open to the possibility of hearing from them valid elements of truth that we will be obliged to integrate into our thinking—"to be transformed by that truth." We must "enter dialogue with no reserved areas at all."

For reasons not explained at length, Cobb focuses his attention upon Mahayana Buddhism, especially the Zen and Pure Land Buddhist traditions of Japan. This makes the subject manageable, offering a specific case illustration, and choosing, happily, a non-Christian tradition with sophistication and power.

"At present we are not in a position to offer much to thoughtful Buddhists," claims Cobb. "Buddhists have a depth of insight into the nature of reality which we lack. As long as Buddhist's becoming Christian entails abandoning that insight, conversion . . . is not a desirable goal of the Christian mission."

The central issue for Cobb in the Christian-Buddhist encounter is reconciling the seemingly nonnegotiable Christian claims for Christ with the seemingly undeniable Mahayana claims about emptiness or nothingness (the Mahayana definition of Nirvana).

By drawing upon his Whiteheadian inclinations, Cobb finds himself able to see God as akin to emptiness and Christ as God's revelation, thus preserving a Christian Christology, though Cobb does not feel the need to preserve the tradition of **clinging** to Christ. On the other hand Cobb believes Buddhists can and should learn from Christians to see the Christ (or Amida) incarnation of God as personal and ethical. Thus "a Buddhized Christianity and a Christianized Buddhism may continue to enrich each other and human culture generally through their differences."

Cobb proposes that Christianity see its mission to become a truly universal faith by taking into itself the truths other faiths have realized. The result is "creative transformation." A "self-transforming Christianity" then has a right "to invite other religious traditions to undergo self-transformation as well."

This reviewer feels the synthesis of Cobb to be a trifle forced and the prospects of its success not at all assured. We should recognize, however, the pressures to soften the traditional exclusive claims of Christianity that are felt today by professors at major theological schools where history of religion studies have burgeoned since World War II. There is no question, as Cobb states, that the Christian worldview has undergone modification since the time of the New Testament as a result of its encounter with Greek thought and the rise of science.

The question remains, however, whether another given modification proposal today surrenders too much of what is felt at this point to be part of the essence of Christian faith. The answer to such a question is not answered by individuals but by the church as a whole and over a long period of history. Proposals by individual thinkers, such as Cobb's here, are nonetheless useful explorations even when rejected, because they can issue in a clarification of the ongoing Christian world mission.

Marlin Jeschke teaches Bible, religion, and philosophy at Goshen (Indiana) College.

A New Missionary Era. Edited by Padrig Flanagan. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1982, 192 pp., $9.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Howard J. Habegger

The book is a series of speeches given by prominent Roman Catholics at the National Missionary Congress held in Knoch, Ireland, in 1979. Catholic theologians, bishops, and missiologists gathered to consider the shape and the issues of "A New Missionary Era."

Roman Catholics view the new missionary era as having begun officially with the documents of the Vatican II Council along with subsequent pronouncements from the Vatican. This book is divided into five brief sections, each dealing with a broad range of contemporary issues as viewed by several leading missiologists.

An analysis of the Roman churches in Africa, Asia, and Latin America includes specific reference to the plight of poor and oppressed peoples. Dialogue in mission, justice, peace, violence, and nonviolence are also addressed by several speakers. A focus on the concept of "base communities" is set over against the traditional parish church structures as they relate to doing effective mission.

One section of the book makes a strong plea for Roman Catholic missioners (this word is preferred to missionaries) to move beyond clericalism to a life of spiritual formation. A personal life of prayer and theological reflection is seen as vital in the task of missionizing.

A series of speeches of particular note is found in the section devoted to the issues of development, justice, national security, and oppressive regimes. The consensus among the speakers is that injustice and oppression must be addressed by the Roman Catholic Church but the methodology is open to wide-ranging opinion.

For those who want to know the latest missiological thinking among Roman Catholics, *A New Missionary Era* is informative and instructive. The tone of the book suggests that Roman Catholic missiologists are doing creative thinking about the role of mission and missionizing. At least they are willing to address the contemporary—and sometimes controversial—issues facing their church and their mission outreach around the world.

Many of the speeches printed are worth the time to read for Protestants and Catholics alike who believe mission is at the center of the nature and life of the Christian church.

Howard J. Habegger is Visiting Professor in New Testament Studies at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. He served as Executive Secretary of Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church 1971-82.

A New Engagement: Evangelical Political Thought, 1966-76. By Robert Booth Fowler. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982, 298 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Abe J. Dueck

Robert Fowler's book is a detailed discussion of evangelical political and social thought in a decade of tremendous turbulence in American society. By the end of the decade surveyed, evangelicals were a highly visible group in the USA, but at the same time, Fowler argues, they had become a diverse group in terms of their social and political ideas and practices.

After introducing the evangelicals, Fowler devotes six chapters to a discussion of "clusters of evangelicals" from *Christianity Today* and the Evangelical Mainstream to the Radicals represented by *Sojourners* and *The Other Side*. Five additional chapters focus on selected issues such as social concerns, the family, communism, Watergate.

The strength of the book is its descriptive detail and the extensive documentation that is provided for the various groups and issues. Fowler has brought together, in readable fashion, a considerable amount of informative material.

The reader will encounter a number of significant problems in Fowler's study, however. One problem is that Fowler fails to come to terms with the significant questions of classification and the theological character of the complex movement of evangelicalism in his introductory chapter. His attempt to describe three different approaches to a definition of evangelicalism is far from satisfactory. The issue of the relationship between the evangelicals and fundamentalists is touched on but not resolved. Hence the reader is left wondering why Fowler used the scheme he did and why some groups are left out.

The major problem, however, concerns the thesis itself which is that the "old evangelical consensus on conservative values in all aspects of life gave way to a spreading social and political diversity in a process of fascinating change" (p. 2, cf. p. 241). Fowler takes for granted a consensus at the beginning of the era, but doesn't give any evidence for such a presupposition. Indeed, on the whole the reader is hardly aware of any underlying thesis and the conclusion is very weakly stated.

Fowler also lacks the theological sophistication for a more adequate analysis. Such concluding comments as "the force of the Bible in evangelical political thought remains extremely strong" or ". . . many leading evangelical thinkers unmistakably apply [the Bible] with one eye on the texts and one eye on contemporary culture. Yet the Bible still counts enormously" (p. 243) hardly generate confidence in the nature of the analysis.

The period under review by Fowler is undoubtedly fascinating, and much helpful material is made available in the study. The questions raised by the material, however, require further analysis.

Abe J. Dueck is Academic Dean and Assistant Professor of Historical Theology at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Oral Communication of the Scripture: Insights from African Oral Art. By Herbert V. Klem. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1982, 256 pp., $9.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Fred Kniss

The unstated assumption underlying Klem's book is that culture is akin to a genetic pool—a kind of resource bank which stores a collection of creative survival responses to various social and ecological environments. If we accept this assumption (and I do), we are led to affirm diversity within the world as something which is necessary for all our well-being. We also begin to realize that Christian missions have much for which to repent. Too often we have been a standardizing force in the world, facilitating the process of Westernization and the extinction of traditional cultures.

According to Klem, we are guilty of this offense in our primary dependence upon the written word for communication of our message. He shows that the spread of literacy has added vertical (class) distinctions to an African society which is already complex with its many horizontal (ethnic) distinctions. The creation of a small, young, literate elite has undermined traditional leaders and contributed to a loss of a group cohesion.

In addition to this, Klem shows that written communication is basically ineffective. In Africa, it is a foreign medium which reaches only a few people. A small percentage of Africans are functionally literate, and only a few of those make a habit of reading more than what is required for their jobs.

Thus, by identifying itself with the literacy effort, Christian missions showed Christianity to be a foreign ideology which threatened local structures. It communicated with only a select few to the exclusion of the masses. Instead of communicating our message within local frames of reference, we required people to enter ours before we could speak to them. Small wonder that today we find new authentically African expressions of faith within mainline missionary churches.

Klem substantiates his argument by drawing a parallel between African society and Palestine at the time of Christ. Both societies have or had complex horizontal and vertical distinctions. Literate people are or were a small minority. Jesus chose to identify with the masses by using oral communication in the local vernacular, Aramaic. This should also be our choice today, says Klem. He and his associates in Nigeria tested his hypothesis by translating the first chapters of Hebrews into traditional Yoruba song. Of a variety of Bible study methods tested, those which combined the written text with the sung text proved to be the most successful in teaching new information and in retention by students.

I would make a few disparate comments in response to this book.

1. Klem's arguments deal only with our communication techniques. But the content of our message has also contributed heavily to the standardizing, Westernizing force of Christianity. The logical next step in this discussion would be to identify ways in which the theological content of our message must change in order to affirm diversity. Klem fails even to point us in this direction.

2. Klem has involved himself in a kind of catch-22. He argues that in order to protect and affirm African culture, we should adopt oral communication methods. Yet the fact that African culture relies on oral communication is a major factor in the ease with which it has been overpowered by Western culture. Unfortunately, Klem fails to deal seriously with this dilemma.

3. As Klem points out, the African love for oral communication is a major element of African Independent Churches. Possibly, it is a key impetus toward their formation. As we Mennonites become increasingly involved with these churches, we should take Klem's ideas about communication seriously. In a sense, we are being given a chance to redeem ourselves in the way we choose to deal with these authentically African expressions of faith.

4. Stylistically, Klem's book is vulnerable to criticism. He makes excessive use of charts. His frequent attempts at restating the text diagrammatically seldom add significant clarification. Second, his writing tends toward the pedantic. He often clutters his arguments with too many details and unnecessary repetitions. These two factors make the book less readable and give it a padded feel. The impression is that he has produced an excellent journal article expanded to book length. One hopes that these problems will not block the reader's view of the significant and powerful ideas Klem has put forth.

Fred Kniss, Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities missionary in Nairobi, Kenya, is Coordinator of Mennonite Islamic Ministries. He previously served as codirector of Eastleigh Fellowship Centre in Nairobi.

Editorial

At a time when North Americans increasingly accept the fact that "smoking is injurious to your health" on scientific grounds, a concerted effort is under way to increase substantially the export of tobacco products to Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

In a hard-hitting exposé in *Christianity and Crisis* (May 30, 1983), Michael H. Crosby details this deleterious "development." Under the impact of a steady educational effort, per capita consumption of cigarettes has increased less than 5 percent in the USA over the past decade while going up 33 percent in Africa and 25 percent in Latin America. The percentage of Americans who smoke declined from 40 to 38 percent between 1968 and 1978. In Brazil since 1974 lung cancer has become the leading cause of deaths among males.

Comparable statistics are being assembled in many developing countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) now insists: "In some developing countries the epidemic of smoking-related disease is already of such magnitude as to rival even infectious disease or malnutrition as a public health problem." Increasingly health experts are calling for preventive rather than curative steps in combating this spreading problem.

For many years the U.S. Food for Peace Program has regularly included shipments of tobacco to developing countries. Senator Jesse Helms, stalwart patron of the tobacco industry, has no trouble justifying these exports since "historically these sales have developed new markets for American tobacco."

Far from taking a consistent position on such a questionable matter, the U.S. government comes down on both sides of the fence. It sponsors educational programs aimed at curbing the use of tobacco ($50 million) while spending much greater sums ($337 million) out of public monies to provide price supports and loans to tobacco growers. In the face of predicted further decline in domestic consumption of tobacco products, the U.S. Department of Agriculture can take heart that "excellent new markets may be springing up in the third world countries."

Michael Crosby assails the health and life insurance companies for taking a similar Jekyll-and-Hyde stance. The ten top U.S. insurance companies offer lower premiums for nonsmokers. At the same time they have heavy investments in the tobacco companies. Crosby concludes: "The life insurance companies are prime beneficiaries of the threats to health and life that their rates imply they are trying to eliminate."

Although questions are being raised about such conflicts of interest, both the tobacco and insurance industries insist no ethical issue is at stake. By stonewalling all reports issued over the past twenty years which link tobacco consumption and diseases, the tobacco companies can maintain with equal consistency that no ethical issue is involved in promoting exports of tobacco products to developing countries. The industry knows its target well: Whereas 95 percent of the developed countries have laws regulating the sale of tobacco (including the issuance of warnings as to health hazards), only 25 percent of the developing countries have such controls.

Not everyone is content to allow such callous disregard for human welfare to go unchallenged. Crosby quotes Dr. Raymond Downing as saying, "The more I've learned, the more I've realized that *sin* is at the root of the entire tobacco industry. Not only does one verse tell us to glorify God in our bodies. But abundant scriptures consistently condemn all forms of oppression and economic exploitation." What Downing attacks are the questionable politics involved in keeping the industry afloat.

In assessing the contribution African Independent Churches (AICs) have made to economic development in their countries, Harold W. Turner has cited, among other reasons, the almost universal ban these churches—in contrast to many mainline churches—have placed on the use of alcohol and tobacco.

Turner cites the boast the Cameroonian government makes. In order to entice tourists, the government touts the brewing industry as the largest in the nation, assuring easy availability of liquor even when other goods may be unavailable. The cost to the people of Cameroon to support this boast is manifold. Brewing is a capital-intensive industry in a capital-poor economy. The industry depends on technology, which Cameroon must import, rather than labor, which Cameroon has in abundance. The product contributes nothing to the health of the nation. On the contrary, alcoholism is a growing problem, exacting a high toll.

AICs, with 6 to 8 million members, therefore make a substantial contribution to economic development by encouraging their members to save rather than spend lavishly, to use their money for products that sustain and enhance the quality of life rather than on harmful substances. They exhort their people to be productive members of society. Although largely ignored by government and official development agencies, such movements have contributed in a most noteworthy manner to development.

—Wilbert R. Shenk

POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

December 1983
Volume 11 Number 4
MISSION FOCUS

Trends and Problems in Theological Education in Newer Churches

DONALD R. JACOBS

Trends in theological education

Since 1960 the newer churches (the so-called Third World churches which came into being as the result of mission activity) have gone through three stages in their reflecting on theological education.

The first was initiated by the Theological Education Fund of the World Council of Churches. This put theological education squarely as a priority item in the church's agenda. The T.E.F. concentrated on strengthening institutions, libraries, teaching faculties, and the accreditation of theological education. By taking this tack they helped to extend the institutional structures of the Western churches into "all the world."

A second wave hit in the seventies. The newer churches began to question the Western style of the institutionization of theological education because their resources could not educate all the leaders that needed educating. In addition the existing institutions concentrated too much effort on too few people at too great a cost for too short a time. The prospect of spreading out theological education to include more of the leaders became a conscious goal, or at least a commonly held good idea.

But churches were faced with the problem of how to abandon or at least reduce commitment to Western-style theological education. Some churches actually closed the doors of their colleges or institutes and put all their eggs into the Theological Education by Extension basket. Few churches solved the problem at all well.

We are now in a third stage in which the newer churches are taking the programs which were developed for them and are examining them on the basis of their priorities and needs. Some churches are well into this stage; others are less so. But the scrutinizing seems to be inevitable.

Already some trends are appearing.

1. Theological institutions are usually the last of the church's institutions to reflect the authentic piety of the local believers. Some refreshing signs indicate that such a reflection is now happening to a significant degree. Some institutions are slowly losing their spiritual foreignness.

2. An overall shift from concentrating almost exclusively on long-term residential training of leaders following the seminary model is being made to more innovative, decentralized efforts which serve to spread the training to more people.

3. While in the past most of the training energy was expended on the few untried, prospective leaders, now churches want to provide some kind of training to those who have proven their reliability in the heat of the battle. With limited resources the churches feel that they cannot afford to train people who will simply walk off with a nice "thank you" after they are trained.

4. One senses a disquiet with present programs. But the churches do not know where to go from here. They realize that they cannot continue with business as usual because the programs now in place will simply not meet their needs.

Problems faced by newer churches

The solution to the bewildering mix of problems facing new churches will not come easily, but time is running out and such problems do not solve themselves. Many of the churches are now facing their problems honestly and courageously. They realize that solutions to the issues must be found.

Here are some of the perplexing problems.

Rapid growth

Many newer churches are growing rapidly. If the churches are simply to train congregational leaders (they all realize that leadership training and theological education must go well beyond that), they will be hard pressed to meet that need. Most of the training programs which these churches inherited are based on the assumption that the church grows slowly. Such programs reflect the condition of the sending churches rather than what is happening in the newer churches. It is not uncommon to see churches getting on the best they can with the leadership available to them, hardly taking any notice of the training institutions in which a few are being educated slowly and carefully, like one fries fish.

Churches know that somehow the leadership programs must

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become part and parcel of the growth process, but they are stymied by the problem because the institutions simply are not made to suit the need. They realize that strategy for growth and strategy for training to enable that growth dare not be separated.

Institutional stereotypes

An unsettling similarity exists in the way a government trains its civil servants and the way the church trains its potential leaders. First of all, people assume that if you are chosen for training you will (if you manage not to get booted out of school) be guaranteed a job. You study; they owe you a living. Second, the system is based on certificates and diplomas which not only show that you have accomplished something but they also elevate you above your fellows. Achievement in an academic setting is supposed to qualify one somehow for leadership in the rough and tumble of life. Third, if you are selected, then you are "owed" training. Others are expected to foot the bill, and there should be no limit to their generosity.

Some of this is necessary, of course, but theological training is bedeviled by inherited patterns in both the church and secular society.

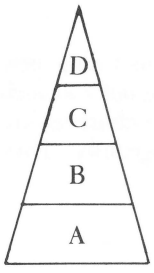
Too much spent on too few

Bible institutes, theological colleges, and seminaries can be frightfully expensive, and the staff-student ratio is usually intolerably low. What this means is that churches often expend almost all of their leadership training resources on the students in the institutions with little left over for the crying needs at other levels.

While a church needs to train at all levels, the fact is that the higher the training is the more is spent on each student. This puts the decision-makers in the church in a real dilemma. How should they use their limited resources to serve the total church best?

We can visualize this dilemma by use of a cost pyramid. The dollar figures are simply rough estimates. The point to note is the differential between the per-student cost at each level.

Per Student Cost Pyramid[1]



	Cost per Person per Year
Advanced Studies	$10,000
Pastoral Training	2,000
Congregational Leadership Training	200
Mass Theological Education	20

For example, $10,000 each year can train one seminarian or fifty congregational leaders or five hundred Bible students who study at home. Each church should have a spread which fits within its budget and which addresses its current needs.

Non-contextualized curriculum

While traveling through South Africa a friend of mine became curious as to why blacks always "chose" the worst land for themselves. I find myself wondering why newer churches "chose" Western curriculums, Western classroom methods, Western measurements of achievements, and theologies forged on the anvils of the world-view of the West. Theological excitement has not yet reached most theological institutes. They are usually as smug and humdrum as sausage factories.

Theological education will catch fire when it addresses local questions in the realities of the local situation, when the wisdom and power of the triune God are released to move the community of faith forward.

Older leaders dominate

Shifting now from the problems facing training programs, huge problems are created by the nature of things in the churches as they are now.

One is the way that the leaders who have held the reins for many years (often traceable to the missionary era) see the education and advancement of younger persons a potential threat to their positions. This fear is compounded by the fact that many of the older leaders are themselves only minimally trained. Can it be that leaders with vested interests often inadvertently withhold training from the next generation?

Potential leaders, noting the ironclad way the advantaged positions in the church are all locked up, may well opt for training in secular fields where their leadership gifts will be employed.

Inappropriate leadership styles

To separate training from the style of the current leadership

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MISSION FOCUS (ISSN 0164-4696) is published quarterly at 500 S. Main St., Elkhart, Indiana, by Mennonite Board of Missions. Single copies available without charge. Send correspondence to Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515. Second-class postage paid at Elkhart, Ind., and at additional mailing offices. Lithographed in USA.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MISSION FOCUS, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

is difficult; one affects the other.

We already noted the way present leaders tend to freeze newcomers out. This is partly because the pay system is often wrong. Given the present level of giving and the relative small number of members per congregation, only a few leaders can be assured adequate support for full-time ministry. Others must engage in tentmaking or simply forget about taking leadership roles at all. A way must be found through this limiting factor.

In some cases the top leadership gets direct or indirect financial assistance or other favors from outside sources. Where this occurs it seems to isolate the leaders from their people. If the people are not responsible to pay their leaders, they cannot easily subject their leaders to their requirements.

The people have a certain ambivalence toward their leaders. They are not convinced that their leaders are really there for them. They often get the feeling that they are serving their leaders instead of the other way around. In many societies the Christian leaders do not adequately fill the role which was formerly held (or is still held) by traditional religious specialists.

Leaders, a new "holy order"

Maybe it is the type of training, maybe it is because Christian leaders are now carving out for themselves a new, undefined category in society, but whatever the cause, pastors and church officials are too often perceived as a breed apart. They are not simply considered holy but "other." Few supported church leaders function in their geographical communities like authentic community leaders. Christian leaders too often lead only the Christians. Maybe this is because the church is seen as a society within a society. In any case, their leadership is not usually considered part of the society's leadership.

This state of affairs is improving in many places. Where it is improved it should serve to attract more committed young leaders.

Theological confusion

During the period of modern missions, churches were planted around the world, but we should not forget that this also represented denominational enlargement. In fact, many missionaries promoted the special emphasis of their respective denominations with more zeal than their sending churches did. Mission work has a way of blunting this denominational enthusiasm for many, but some of it does remain. As these newly planted denominational churches express themselves they are caught between being just Christians and being denominational Christians. This tension is inevitable perhaps, but it would be much healthier if the differences were germane to the local concerns. Too often they are imported. In some ways theological institutions perpetuate divisions which the local Christians do not really perceive as important.

The result of this is a Babel of confusion. So not only is each church struggling to understand itself in light of the pressing local needs, it is also seeking to be some sort of "...ite". As theological students go from one institute to another they can get thoroughly confused. This is not, by the way, peculiar to the newer churches.

The role of women

What place do women have in the life and ministry of the church? Since few churches have any concept at all as to the leadership role of women in their churches, they simply let the women catch as catch can. Or women are trained in the context of a specific women's movement. The theological institutions hardly know what to do with women. Of course, churches differ as to the role of women, but few have spelled it out.

The list of problems confronting the churches as they consider leadership training could be extended even further. These and other problems may not deter the churches. They should rather increase the urgency for solutions. Exciting times lie ahead.

Theological orientation and method

In some way the mode, content, and structure of training should, in order to be authentic, conform to the theological orientation of a church.

Anabaptists should seek ways and means to be Anabaptist in their theological training that are appropriate in their local setting. They may add to the confusion, but theological education which is borrowed is not going to help much either. One hopes one can be authentic without being separatistic. All methods are not equally good. Authentic modes must be sought.

Jesus himself faced the question as to what type of leadership training he would pursue to get his disciples ready in a comparatively short time to do the works of God in the future. Several models were available, the synagogue model being the most prominent.

In the synagogue young leaders were prepared to assume leadership responsibilities by observing the way it was done. Slowly the youth assumed more and more responsibility until at last when called upon to lead they were ready. Jesus rejected this model as the one he would use. Perhaps he disliked the way that this produced people beholden to the system with little left to challenge them except to carry on with business as usual in their ghetto communities. Jesus needed something more.

Jesus also had the seminary model. Gamaliel was involved with one in Jerusalem, and presumably there were others. Jesus also rejected this model. Perhaps he knew that the faith which is to be shared around the world is not simply propositional truth which can be logically taught and caught in a classroom setting. Faith is not only learned; it is done. Jesus did not therefore establish a seminary, nor did the disciples.

Rather, Jesus chose the prophet model for the training of the Twelve. John the Baptist had chosen this model as well; he gathered around himself several committed disciples, and they shared the ministry with him. Jesus followed in these footsteps; he invited the learners to participate with him in the work which the Father had given him. Early on Jesus shared not only his life but also his power. He lived with his students through the ministry. Now and then he sent them out to work "in his name," but mostly they all moved about as a ministering team.

In this way the disciples entered deeply into Jesus' life, his person, and his ministry. The association changed them radically. They were so astoundingly changed that they continued to live the life of Christ even in the face of flint-steel opposition.

It worked. Jesus' method of training related directly to his own orientation, to be the servant of all, and he succeeded in a remarkable educational undertaking, a three-year course which shook the world and is still shaking it.

We are not Jesus Christ, nor do we have his power nor his wisdom, but this should not divert us from rolling up our sleeves and making hard but necessary decisions about training disciples in our day. This is the hour for creative leadership in the area of theological education and leadership training. The future depends on it.

We can no longer try to make do with Saul's armor. The methodology of training must arise authentically out of a theological/sociological context. If our theology does not affect the methods we use to disciple people, then the methods we have will affect our theology. We and the world will be the losers.

Opposition to the Apostolic Witness in Acts

WILBERT R. SHENK

Luke begins the Acts of the Apostles with the matter-of-fact observation that Jesus "presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). He ends Acts in an equally cryptic manner: Paul "lived there [Rome] two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered" (Acts 28:30f.).

Thus beginning and ending strike the same note. The final instruction Jesus gave to his disciples had as its subject the kingdom of God. Likewise, the apostle Paul spent his last days in Rome expounding on the kingdom of God to all who visited him.

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The kingdom theme does not have a prominent explicit role in Acts. In addition to the two references noted above, the kingdom of God is referred to in passing only seven times (Acts 1:6; 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23). Yet Acts is a sustained description of a power encounter on every level: personal, ethnic, religious, demonic, political, cosmic. That encounter takes place on the cutting edge of the apostolic witness to the Christ, in response to the young church's keen awareness of its missionary character.

Our purpose here is simply to trace the theme of official opposition to the preaching of the gospel in order to demonstrate its pervasive influence (see, for example, Swartley, 1983:18-37). Acts consists of twenty-eight chapters divided into 1,007 verses. Some 426 verses treat aspects of the opposition. We shall use the method of arranging, seriatim, each relevant incident in Acts, the charge brought against the apostles, and the outcome of the encounter.

Text	Incident	Charge	Outcome
Acts: *4:3-21*	Peter and John arrested	Teaching the people, proclaiming resurrection in Jesus	Released after being threatened. Peter and John answer: "Whether it is right to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge."
5:17-41	High priest and Sadducees arrest apostles	Teaching in the name	Peter and John: "We must obey God rather than men." Officials beat apostles, warn them, release them.
6:8-8:1	Synagogue officials "secretly instigated men," leading to arrest	"We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God."	Stephen stoned
8:1-3	Great persecution against church		Church laid waste in Jerusalem; scattered to Judea and Samaria
9:23-25 (Cf. 2 Cor. 11: 32f.)	Jews plot Saul's death in Damascus	Proving that Jesus was the Christ	Saul escapes by basket over city wall
11:19			"Now those who were scattered because of the persecution . . . traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, Antioch."
12:1-5	Herod kills James; arrests Peter		Peter miraculously released from prison
13:4-12	Elymas the magician opposes Paul		Paul causes Elymas to become blind
13:44-51	Jews incite leading men and women against apostles at Antioch, Pisidia		Paul and Barnabas withdraw
14:1-6	Unbelieving Jews at Iconium stir up Gentiles		City becomes divided, plan stoning of Paul and Barnabas

14:19	Jews from Iconium and Antioch stone Paul		Paul and Barnabas move on to Derbe
16:19-40	At Philippi magistrates tear off garments, order them beat with rods, jail them	"These men are Jews and they are destroying our city" (for delivering girl from evil power)	Earthquake occurs: Paul and Silas can escape from jail but elect to stay. Magistrate orders release, but Paul announces he is Roman citizen with rights. (v. 37)
17:1-9	At Thessalonica synagogue leaders hire rabble-rousers to lead riot against Paul and Silas	"They are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king, Jesus." (v. 7)	Jason posts bail; Paul and Silas sent away to Berea
17:13-14	Thessalonica Jews follow Paul and Silas to Berea		Paul sent away by sea; Silas and Timothy remain
18:5-7	At Corinth: "they opposed and reviled him"	Preached "that the Christ was Jesus"	"From now on I will go to the Gentiles." Moved to house of Titius Justus.
18:12-17	Under Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, Jews make united attack on Paul; arraign Paul before tribunal	"This man is persuading men to worship God contrary to the law"	Gallio refuses to hear case on grounds it is religious, not civil
19:23-41	Demetrius incites silversmiths against Paul for his criticism of idol worship	". . . the Way" stirred things up (threat to economy)	Mob action at public theater quelled by town clerk
20:2-3	Jews plot against Paul at Greece		
21:27-36	In Jerusalem Paul arrested/imprisoned	"This is the man who is teaching . . . against the people and the law and this place; . . . he also brought Greeks into the temple . . . defiled this holy place." (21:28)	
21:37—22:29	His defense before tribune		
22:30—23:10	Trial before Sanhedrin		
23:12-35	Moved to Caesarea		
24	Defense before Felix		
25	Defense before Festus		
26	Defense before Agrippa		
27	Sails to Rome as prisoner		
28:17-29	Imprisoned in Rome		Dies as prisoner

Observations

On the level of straightforward reading of the text, one notices several things.

1. Whether it came from the political or religious authorities, opposition to Christian witness was almost universal. Authorities did not perceive the Christian witness as being neutral.

2. Opposition to the Christian witness was an expression of perceived threat. The Christian message which emphasized the kingship of Christ evidently challenged the authority of both religious and civil leaders. This threat took different forms, depending on who was involved: chief priests and Sadducees, artisans, sorcerers, king, synagogue leaders.

3. For Paul and other apostles the presence or absence of opposition was not the basis on which they responded in witness. Paul did not alter his message as a result of opposition, and he stuck by a pattern of witness throughout his missionary journeys despite the fact that this consistently landed him in conflict. Paul from the beginning adopted the pattern of going to the synagogue in the town where he was visiting as the forum from which to begin his witness in that community. This placed him immediately in relationship to the local Jewish community. His basic message was that Jesus is **the** Messiah. He condemned idolatry, and he helped and healed, regardless of economic, political, or religious consequences. Reactions to him were seldom neutral. Often the synagogue community became divided over Paul's message. This reaction rippled throughout the larger community. Despite his repeated hostile encounters at these local synagogues, Paul did not change his pattern of approach.

4. Paul's response to opposition, however, did vary. At least five different responses can be identified:

a. Escaped or withdrew (Acts 9:23-25; 13:48-51; 14:19-20)
b. Remained even though escape was possible (16:19-40)
c. Left when advised to by local people (17:1-9; 17:13)
d. Shook dust off in protest (18:5-6)
e. Demanded rights as a Roman citizen to an apology (16:37-39) and to trial (25:8-12)

Apparently in each situation extenuating circumstances, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, called for fresh discernment as to the proper response. No mechanical formula would suffice. Each situation was different, and the apostles were called on to sift through the evidence, counsel with the local believers, submit the matter to the Holy Spirit's direction, and then act accordingly.

Behind each decision stood the question: How is God's rule coming to bear on this situation, and what is the path of faithfulness to his sovereignty required in this moment? Always the apostles had an acute sense of God's rule being in opposition to the other powers and the call to submit absolutely to the reign of God rather than the powers of this world.

The challenge since Acts

Throughout history the church has had to face the same challenge as did the first apostles: in the name of Jesus Christ to address the powers which oppress; to announce that Jesus is Lord and call for submission to his kingship. The ways Christians have conceived their role in confronting the powers and proclaiming the lordship of Jesus Christ have varied. We can identify at least three main patterns.

Withdrawal

One response which Christians have adopted has been to withdraw from engagement with the world into a position of isolation, especially with reference to the sociopolitical realm. They thereby have disclaimed responsibility for the welfare of the larger society, placing the maintenance of their identity in highest priority.

Ironically, such an approach has usually been successful only as the group made certain accommodations to the larger society in exchange for being allowed to determine its own destiny in those respects most vital to it. For example, some groups have sought refuge in a country which would grant them exemption from military conscription. The granting of this privilege has always placed the group "in debt" to the government. This sense of indebtedness has generally resulted in a loss of critical distance from the political establishment. The groups which had been refugees "for conscience' sake" have become loyalists who have stoutly defended their benefactor regardless of its use of power.

Christendom

A second position has been that of encouraging the Christian community to enter fully into the life of society. In contrast to the first position, the church sees itself as guardian of the religious values of society. This position makes sense where the majority of the population in that society call themselves Christian, or Christians are a part of the power structure of society (e.g., as in South Africa). This was the Christendom self-understanding of the nature and role of the church in society.

However, as the church over the past two centuries has spread around the world into countries which think of themselves as Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, or having some other religiocultural history, the Christendom pattern has broken down. The church, even in the West, has increasingly become a minority which can seldom claim privileged status in society.

Alternative

A third preference has been to see the church as a self-conscious alternative to the present sociopolitical order, living out a new possibility in response to God's reign. This means that the church does not sidestep the crucial issue of power and how it is being wielded.

Rather, the church consciously tests and discerns the impact of power of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. When people's lives are being oppressed and destroyed by the demonic, the church proclaims liberation and hope in Jesus Christ. Rather than seeing some countries or cultures as Christian and others pagan, the church maintains a rigorously missionary stance toward all cultures and nations.

The reader is invited to evaluate these positions in the light of the account of apostolic witness given in Acts.

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In review

The Holy Spirit in the New Testament. By David Ewert. Scottdale/Kitchener: Herald Press, 1983, 324 pp., $11.95 U.S./$14.35 Canada (pb)

Reviewed by Adelia Neufeld Wiens

This volume is a helpful handbook on the role and work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. David Ewert, formerly a professor at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California, and currently President of Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba, perceives the teaching about the Holy Spirit to be "a key that unlocks many doors." Consequently, he offers a thorough, interesting treatment of each related passage in the New Testament.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first part, "The Promise of the Spirit," summarizes the Old Testament and Gospel references to the Holy Spirit. The second section, "The Coming of the Spirit," focuses on events in the book of Acts. The third section, "The Spirit in the Life of the Believer," deals comprehensively with the role of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament epistles. Each part is also divided into chapters, where the topic is analyzed in greater detail.

Throughout the book, Ewert addresses issues regarding the Holy Spirit that frequently arise in the church today. He deals in particular depth with the "second work of grace" theology which teaches that salvation is experienced in two stages, baptism with water and baptism with the Spirit. Interpreting the New Testament accounts in this way is "exegetically illegitimate," asserts Ewert. He even mentions a well-known hymn which includes this erroneous doctrine.

Ewert also provides an insightful discussion on the controversial subjects of speaking in tongues and prophecy. Throughout his treatment, he stresses that the Holy Spirit "is bound up with the teachings of Jesus." The Spirit's work must be perceived as totally Christocentric, enabling believers to attain a greater likeness to Christ in their lives.

Ewert is aware of and frequently engages in the academic debate, making reference to works by major scholars such as J. D. G. Dunn, M. Green, W. Lane, F. F. Bruce. However, this academic discussion in no way blurs the focus of the book. Ewert is intent on "making difficult things simple," and he provides excellent historical background and practical application in each chapter.

The book has some veritable gems of insight. For example, Ewert shows the connection of the Jewish Feast of Weeks (Pentecost in Greek) with the gift of the Holy Spirit given on that day, bringing to our attention the appropriateness of the Pentecost event occurring on the traditional Jewish day of great rejoicing. Ewert also clarifies the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the law, observing that the Spirit constitutes a third way of life, distinct from and above both legalism and lawlessness.

Further, Ewert pens a thought-provoking and wise statement: "The chief evidence of the fullness of the Spirit is to be found not in the miraculous, but in the ethical dimension of the Christian life."

This book is the first, to my knowledge, to combine a scholarly treatment of the Holy Spirit with an Anabaptist role of the Christian individual and community. Thus, the value of this volume is significant.

A few assertions within it may need more clarification, but these are comparatively insignificant. One example lies in Ewert's brief outline of "ways of testing" whether someone has the Holy Spirit (p. 191). Another lies in his assertion that "Pentecost marked the final stage of salvation history" (p. 101). Both of these assertions contain assumptions that are not entirely clear to the reader.

Such questions aside, this book serves to show in a fresh way that the Holy Spirit has a central role in the life of a Christian. *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament* offers to layperson and pastor alike a treasure of information and interpretation. It deserves a place on the bookshelves of scholars, missionaries, and ministers.

Adelia Neufeld Wiens is a graduate student in religion at the University of Manitoba.

The Way of Biblical Justice. By José Gallardo. Scottdale/Kitchener: Herald Press, 1983, 76 pp., $.95 U.S./$1.15 Canada (pb)

Reviewed by Lawrence H. Greaser

José Gallardo was the youngest son of a Spanish Roman Catholic family who wanted him to become a priest. At age eleven he was enrolled in a seminary of the Dominican Order. When he left the seminary he went to Belgium as a young migrant worker and experienced firsthand the injustices perpetrated on such persons.

The social service efforts of Mennonite mission workers in Belgium helped foreign workers and led to the beginning of the Mennonite Church in Brussels. There Gallardo had a personal encounter with Jesus as his Savior and Lord.

After studying in Mennonite seminaries in Uruguay, USA, and Belgium, he was ordained as an itinerant preacher, teacher, and part-time pastor of the Spanish Mennonite Church in Brussels. Upon returning to Spain, he joined a renewal movement and continues an itinerant ministry among churches in Spain.

The Way of Biblical Justice is a brief statement on a large theme. In keeping with the format of the Mennonite Faith Series, of which this is volume 11, Gallardo sets forth in simple terms biblical insights on the subject. He treats the material in six chapters:

1. Law and Justice in the Old Testament
2. The Meaning of Justice in the Old Testament
3. The Prophets Speak About Justice
4. Jesus and Justice
5. We Face Issues of Justice
6. The Future of God Will Bring Justice

Gallardo disagrees with those who maintain that justice is outside the realm of concern and duty of the Christian church. As a biblical scholar and advocate for the poor, he shows that biblical justice goes beyond law. It includes the concept of wholeness and well-being in all areas of life—social, religious, economic, and political.

Gallardo brings into focus important truths from both Old and New Testaments as well as the understanding and practice of sixteenth-century Anabaptists. He maintains that God's plan of justice includes good news for the poor, freedom for the captives, healing for the sick, release for the oppressed, grace, and forgiveness.

One hopes that a larger manuscript Gallardo has written on this subject will become available. In the meantime this booklet is a good introduction combining both biblical and personal experience of the author in a good teaching method.

Lawrence H. Greaser directs Latin-American missions for Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind. He served with MBM in Puerto Rico from 1950 to 1971.

Evangelism as Discipling. By Myron S. Augsburger. Scottdale/Kitchener: Herald Press, 1983, 80 pp., $.95 U.S./$1.15 Canada (pb)

Reviewed by Lawrence H. Greaser

Myron S. Augsburger, Mennonite church leader, interdenominational and international evangelist, lifelong student of the Scriptures, pastor of the Washington (D.C.) Community Fellowship, writes from a base authenticated by experience, study, and observation.

In *Evangelism as Discipling* he articulates in precise, clear terminology what evangelism is and does, based on scriptural texts at the be-

ginning of each of the fourteen chapters. Throughout the booklet the phrase "evangelism is" appears repeatedly.

Illustrative of these poignant statements is the following: "Evangelism is not adequate if it does not call persons into a relationship with Christ that reorders the total life. We are not simply announcing a way to inner peace or to a new self-awareness, but to a new oneness in the community of Christ."

Augsburger outlines for us a biblical perspective of evangelism, an expression of God's grace; Christ's work and example are the motivation and model for our evangelism and the relationship of evangelism, discipling and new-community (kingdom) priorities. Augsburger also gives practical guidelines for servanthood witnessing of hope biculturally through Christian fellowship groups, friendship, and as agents of change.

This booklet is an important addition to the Mennonite Faith Series. Its content and style provide excellent study materials for small groups and Sunday school classes as well as sermon preparation.

Exploring Church Growth. Edited by Wilbert R. Shenk. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983, 312 pp. $10.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Ben Doerksen

The Church Growth Movement continues to be about as controversial in the arena of missions as it has been contagious. The movement knows no denominational barriers and has been adapted by missionary societies around the globe.

Yet the rapid spread of the movement and the implementation of its basic principles have not been without criticism. Critics challenge the strong emphasis on the Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP), especially in light of the Hindu caste system in India and the South African policies of apartheid, the extreme pragmatism in terms of methodology (how to grow a church), and the absence of a solid foundational theology.

In *Exploring Church Growth,* Wilbert Shenk has compiled twenty-two essays by missionaries, educators, and theologians who grapple with these issues.

In the first of this book's three sections, former missionaries present six Third World case studies which challenge the Church Growth philosophy that the use of right methods will produce numerical growth. Each writer searches for factors that contributed to church growth in his particular area of ministry. Factors cited include government pressure, urbanization, desire for education, persecution, and even the curiosity of Christian marriage.

But as C. W. Forman says in "The Difficulty of Understanding Church Growth in Madagascar," "When we examine the missionaries' work we find it was typical of much of the work done in that period. . . . Nothing in these methods would explain why the church grew so much faster in Madagascar than in India or Africa" (pp. 7-8). Or as Shenk summarizes in the Preface (p. vii), "[Church growth] is a complex phenomenon surrounded by a measure of mystery and, if genuine, is directed and controlled by a sovereign God."

Section II contains seven essays grappling with methodological issues. In "Looking for a Method: Backgrounds and Suggestions" Harvey Conn analyzes the HUP from a biblical perspective and concludes that homogeneity actually has a demonic side to it. He contends that there is an intertwining of the religious and social aspects of culture and that all social groupings, be they family, tribe, social class, or church, are tainted by sin. It is therefore not precise to argue, as does the Church Growth Movement, that "the great obstacles to conversion are social, not theological" (p. 88).

Orlando Costas in "A Wholistic Concept of Church Growth" warns against the "peril of becoming so entrepreneurial that one will do literally anything to grow a church, including selling down the river basic tenets of the Christian faith" (p. 96).

David Shenk in "The Muslim Umma and the Growth of the Church" challenges the Church Growth assumption "that the fundamental objection of Islam to the gospel is Western culture, [and] that if the gospel gets clothed in appropriate cultural forms, the theological objections will be easily surmounted" (p. 146). Shenk denies that Muslims will be painlessly attracted to Christ through such devices. He says, "The theological issues cannot be surmounted by cultural niceties" (p. 153).

Section III contains nine essays examining the theological underpinnings of the Church Growth Movement. Although the arguments become rather technical and heavy at times, the articles deal with the people of God in terms of such biblical concepts as creation, the call of Abraham, the life and ministry of Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the kingdom of God.

The HUP also comes under attack once again. René Padilla argues that "the Church Growth emphasis on homogeneous unit churches is in fact directly opposed to the apostolic teaching and practice in relation to the expansion of the church" (p. 301). Frederick Norris considers Church Growth "too much a twentieth-century, pragmatic, sociological phenomenon which has too little connection with New Testament or early Christian history" (p. 272).

Wilbert Shenk, in reflecting on the parables of growth, reminds us that malignant cancers grow most rapidly. "Among the fastest growing religious movements in the world are cults and sects whose allegiance is not to the kingdom of God" (p. 216). Padilla decries the fact that while the movement can exhibit dozens of books and dissertations dealing with the Church Growth approach, it has not yet produced a single major work on the theology of mission.

Although each of these twenty-two essays can be read as an independent unit, I had difficulty laying aside the book until I had read them all. Wilbert Shenk needs to be commended for compiling such a fine selection of objective and scholarly analyses of the Church Growth Movement.

Ben Doerksen, Hepburn, Saskatchewan, is Director of Missions at Bethany Bible Institute.

Pauline Theology and Mission Practice. By Dean S. Gilliland. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983, 309 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Peter Fast

Dean S. Gilliland, director of the program of cross-cultural studies and associate professor of Contextualized Theology and African Studies at Fuller's School of World Mission, brings to his book twenty-one years of missionary service in post-colonial Nigeria.

Although the author writes from a post-colonial experience, his mentor is nevertheless one who wrote prior to the era of colonial independence; Roland Allen, a secondary source, appears frequently in the book.

The conclusions to which the author comes are fundamentally evangelical. Conversion is interpreted in highly personal terms, later modified when the author emphasizes the church as relational rather than personal existence.

Because of the author's emphasis on conversion as total (p. 64), as "espousing a completely new vantage point" (p. 92), he has difficulty relating in an integral way the converts to their culture and religion from which they come. A weakness of the book is in the area of interre-

ligious influences which help shape and create diverse expressions of the Christian faith. A discussion of interreligious influences seldom surfaces in the book, in spite of its great urgency. Cultural factors are taken more clearly into account.

In part the author's problem stems from a misunderstanding of Paul's conversion, which Gilliland uses paradigmatically (p. 95). Paul, however, never converted in the sense of turning from "counterfeit gods" (p. 102). Paul throughout his life remained a Jew serving the one, true God. He never understood himself as having turned from the Jewish to the Christian faith.

Furthermore, the author adopts the justification-sanctification model of the Reformers to describe the process of becoming Christian—justification first, then sanctification. This model, combined with Gilliland's understanding of conversion, makes it virtually impossible to integrate meaningfully faith and works and consequently also the values of religion and culture with the faith of those who become Christian.

Culture and religion, for the author, belong to the realm of flesh *(sarx)*, allied with sin (pp. 241-42) and so in total opposition to the Lord Jesus (p. 102). This division also leads to a "conversion first, physical needs second" type of approach to social concerns (p. 65). St. Paul, however, faithful to his Jewish heritage, knew of no such faith-works dichotomy. Nor did his forefather, Abraham.

On these matters in the book, Paul would hardly recognize himself. The author does, however, make many helpful suggestions for accomplishing the missionary task in a post-colonial era. His emphasis on the Holy Spirit is truly Pauline. So also is his emphasis on Paul's theological method that the constant and the contextual are in continuous interplay. His repeated plea for the independence and indigeneity of newly founded churches must not go unheeded.

In these matters and many more the author speaks the missionary word for the hour. The book contains much down-to-earth, practical advice. However, these wholesome suggestions lack an integral biblical-theological base.

For another book on mission theory and practice, we can be truly grateful to the author. This book will profit many, the specialist as well as those with a lay interest in mission.

Peter Fast is assistant professor of Bible at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba. He earlier had a teaching assignment in Indonesia with Mennonite Central Committee.

Contemporary Theologies of Mission. By Arthur F. Glasser and Donald A. McGavran. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983, 251 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by John H. Yoder

The first two deans of the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary have joined forces to survey the state of the debate about the theology of the Christian mission. There are today, they say, basically four camps. Each is described with just enough history to locate its differences from the others.

The "correct" view is held by the authors and by the institutions with which they have associated. This view is biblically founded and can claim to be classical; in its essentials it was held to by most Protestant missionaries and mission agencies until the 1930s. It has no basic internal problems or blind spots, though it does need continual updating and adjustment to new challenges, and its representatives needed to "find each other" in the 1960s.

The view the authors call "conciliar," although first stated (according to this report) by William Ernest Hocking, not a church bureaucrat, is actively promoted by the staff of the World Council of Churches and accepted by much of the leadership of WCC member churches. It relativizes biblical authority, downplays conversion of individuals, and redefines mission as all the good causes which Christians should support.

The view stated by the 1965 Vatican II Decree *Ad Gentes*, although it retains some regrettable Roman Catholic errors (the role of Mary, of the papacy, of the priesthood), is nonetheless **as far as mission is concerned** solidly biblical. It calls for all peoples to be effectively called to faith and enrolled in the church.

Fourth, liberation theologies are just now "bursting on the scene." The account does not clarify whether this fourth option is authentically a new one, or just a mutation within the conciliar deviation.

The text of this book will be usable in Bible colleges where the posture of planting first the base line of the reliable "correct answer" is reassuring. It will give a welcome and well-documented picture of the official recent development of Roman Catholic thought (these chapters being the ones most seriously supported by citations from the appropriate texts). These Catholic chapters, by reading only Vatican documents, come off more Roman than is the church. Important streams of revisionist thought about the truth status of other religions have arisen among Catholic theologians which, if McGavran had included them, would have weakened his claim that the Catholic view is more classical and biblical than the conciliar one.

The picture of the other two "wrong" views is less adequate. The reader (especially the reader who would be so little informed as to need such a description) can hardly tell from these descriptions how or why such views could attract anyone. This tends to foster the notion of a conspiracy whereby a handful of bureaucrats have brainwashed the previously well-based churches—hardly a fair picture of the motivations behind the searching and the redefinitions which the authors (often rightly) challenge. The challenge would have been more dialogical (and thereby more credible) if it had sought instead to ascertain what were the shortcomings of the classical missionary enterprise which provoked such a far-reaching reappraisal.

An advocate of the theologies of liberation would correct Glasser's omission of reference to evangelical liberationists and would report that the use of concepts borrowed from Marxist social analysis is far more critical than he grants. To be fair he would have needed parallel chapters about the borrowing of capitalist and colonialist categories by other generations of missionaries. Glasser would not defend all those earlier alliances, but the theology and mission praxis he calls classical accepted them in a syncretism not much more self-critical than that of what he accuses the liberationists.

The coverage of the liberation and Catholic schools, while useful and appropriate, would not have led the authors to write this book. Its primary target is the "wrongness" of the conciliar view, which in turn (as they see it) has set itself the primary task of undercutting classical biblical mission thought. The attack is not scurrilous, as is some fundamentalist and some mass-media anticonciliar polemic, but it is skewed:

1. It wrongly suggests that a handful of bureaucrats and intellectuals operating from Geneva could effectively mislead the global church, therefore avoiding the more challenging, more repentant exercise of asking to what unmet needs and from what prophetic imperatives these developments spoke.

2. It fails to distinguish between critiques and correctives on the surface and the growing edges of the world missionary enterprise, which is largely what fuels the ecumenical dialogue, and the maintenance of the mainstream momentum through the statement of a normative vision, which the mission agencies of the major member churches have largely reserved for themselves and continue to carry on in relatively classical ways. The chapter, "New Mission," is especially misleading at this point.

To the book's basic survey of the four

schools, McGavran has added three chapters of his own thought: on the reformulation of doctrine, on particular theologies, and on religious liberty. While valuable, they do not represent one of the four schools. They represent rather a prolongation and clarification which McGavran proposes to add to the classical/biblical/evangelical view.

The two authors have not sought either to name or to hide their differences. Glasser calls William Ernest Hocking "William" while McGavran calls him "Ernest." Glasser listens longer before condemning.

For those who prefer to learn about a debate from one of the partisans, this book will be an excellent successor to McGavran's earlier *Eye of the Storm*. The reader seeking to see dialogue described more dialogically will prefer David Bosch, *Witness to the World*.

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The Expansion of God. By Leslie G. Howard. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1981, 452 pp., $14.95 (pb)

Reviewed by C. Norman Kraus

This is not intended as a scholarly work, but one of "imagination and synthesis which needed to be written," says the author in his introduction. A native of Ireland, the author feels himself empathetically in touch with Asia and above some of the biases that have plagued those who had to defend or repent of an imperialistic past. This information is pertinent to a review since the book is unabashedly a personal reflection full of "I think," "I feel," "I believe," "I would suggest."

Howard's general thesis, if I understand him, is that Christian missions in Asia spent most of their time and energy in transferring Western church and theological patterns, insisting on its own orthodoxies. Thus God has been viewed in static Greek categories rather than the more dynamic, human-related categories of Asia.

Until we can think in terms of "the expansion of God," i.e., the de-Westernization of God, and relate God in a real incarnational development to human culture, Christianity does not have much chance in Asia. On page 363 Howard suggests that the "unprecedented revision" of Christianity's theology in Asia must include "a new emphasis on feminine values of wholeness and feeling and a new ritual and organization." Christianity must "enter into a dynamic relation to Asia" (p. 413).

The book is a wide-ranging, verbose, informed, but poorly organized overview of the religious situation in Asia, particularly as it has been related to the Christian mission endeavor of the past. Flashes of insight, unfortunately, are fairly rare, and I found myself often tiring of the garrulous flow of nebulously connected information.

Howard's observations on the Asian religious scene are interesting, but they strike me as not all that original. Especially the chapter on Japan, which I know best, is based on sources from the fifties and sixties and already seems dated.

I suggest that anyone who wants to read this book begin with the last chapter. This would be especially relevant advice for anyone who knows something about the Asia scene already.

C. Norman Kraus serves in Japan with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana. He earlier taught religion at Goshen (Ind.) College.

Living Theology in Asia. Edited by John C. England. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1982, 242 pp., $9.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Jim Pankratz

This book attempts too much, fails, but still is studded with jewels of insight.

The editor, John England of the Tao Fong Shan Ecumenical Centre in Hong Kong, has gathered excerpts from the writings of twenty-four Asian theologians from twelve countries. In addition, he has provided brief historical, political, and theological sketches of these countries so that the readings can "be seen as part of a living stream of Christian thought and life in a particular country" (Preface).

The theology is dominantly missional and pastoral; it is about confessing Christ in the concrete situation of the people. The book clearly communicates that the church in Asia is deeply committed to being authentically rooted in the various national cultures, being independent of Western theological domination, and helping to establish just and humane societies in situations where human need and despair are great.

The issues of human rights, religion and state, and a just sociopolitical order not only form the context but also often provide the specific occasions for some of these theological reflections.

The particular perspectives of the authors provide jewels of insight and expression. Professor Shuh of Korea senses how Christ enters into our human experience, and therefore suggests that Christ is the victim on the road in the Good Samaritan story. Those who pass by are those unwilling to share Christ's suffering (1 Pet. 4:13).

The experience of human tyranny prompts Raymond Fund of Hong Kong to suggest that a relevant gospel has to recognize individuals not only as sinners, but also as those who are sinned against by others. Although Aloysius Pieris' statement, "We know Jesus the *Truth* by following Jesus the *Way*" (p. 173), comes from Sri Lanka, it could well have come from one of our Anabaptist forebears in Europe.

This book has three main limitations. First, although it tries to put particular theologians into a living context, it cannot; it cites too many authors, too many countries, too many organizations and book titles. Second, the theological reflections deal almost exclusively with socio-economic-political issues; the interaction between Christians and their culture—religion, philosophy, art, literature—is largely absent. Third, not a single excerpt reflects any Islamic presence in Asia at all.

But the book is a start in making available to a wider audience the Christian thinking of our Asian brothers and sisters. Some college theology and church history courses will find it a helpful companion volume.

It attempts too much. Much better that, though, than no attempt at all.

Jim Pankratz serves with Mennonite Central Committee in Bangladesh.

The Cross and the Floating Dragon: The Gospel in Ryukyu. By Edward E. Bollinger. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1983, 345 pp., $10.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Robert L. Ramseyer

The subtitle of this book might well be "Everything You Have Ever Wanted to Know About the Christian Church in Okinawa." Edward Bollinger, missionary in Okinawa since 1955, has brought together an incredible wealth of material on the Christian movement from the seventeenth century to the present in what is now Okinawa Prefecture in Japan. As a fact source book this volume has great potential value, value which would be immeasurably increased if an index were added.

Unfortunately, this book suffers from an apparent absence of careful editing. The style is extremely repetitious, and the organization is at times less than clear. Readers not familiar with Okinawa in particular and Japan in general will find themselves totally confused at many points. Although I personally am interested in the subject matter, I found that reading this book through was a trial to my patience.

The book includes many anecdotes, interesting in themselves, but whose relevance to the discussion is not always clear. It is as if the author could not bear to discard any of the fruits of his research.

This book represents good, solid research which is not too well presented.

Robert L. Ramseyer is Director of the Mission Training Center, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. He earlier served as a missionary in Japan with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Holding the Ropes. By Helen Jean Parks. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1983, 156 pp., $5.95

Reviewed by Hilda Hamm

This excellent book by Helen Jean Parks, a missionary to Indonesia for fourteen years and now living in Virginia where her husband is the president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, is more than a book on praying for missions. Much more.

In a refreshing readable style Parks deals with principles of prayer that can be related to both missions and personal everyday situations that will bring a new dimension to anyone's prayer life.

Along with well-documented true mission experiences from SBC co-workers, Parks quotes broadly from many of the great classics on prayer: Andrew Murray, S. D. Gordon, G. Campbell Morgan, O. Hallesby, R. A. Torrey, A. H. Strong, and contemporary authors. One difficulty was the frequent quoting from missionaries unknown to this reader, thus distracting from the continuity of the main text.

In the foreword Parks writes, "Of the multitude of books written on prayer, the great classics are centered on intercession that is evangelistic and missionary. We are to take the world by praying, loving and witnessing.... We have been given the authority and responsibility to mediate between God and every other person in the world."

This book was well chosen as a text for a course in "Missions" of the Church Study Course. It is a choice book that you will want to keep within reach and refer to often. It will stimulate, motivate, and activate your own prayer life.

Hilda Hamm, Virgil, Ontario, is married to and secretary for Art Hamm, FEBC Ontario Regional Representative Church Reporter for the Mennonite Brethren Herald.

Mission Focus Index

Volume 11 (1983)

This index is divided into two main categories: (A) General Missions and (B) Area Studies. Each article is listed by author, title, and *Mission Focus* volume number and issue. In addition, each entry is assigned a number in *italic* for ease in cross-referencing. Please note that this index continues the index for volumes 1-10 found in the December 1982 issue of *Mission Focus*.

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Editorial

Gordon Hewitt entitled his two-volume history of the (Anglican) Church Missionary Society for the period 1910-1942 *The Problems of Success* (London: SCM, 1971 & 1977). Hewitt's history covers the period of CMS work which followed the pioneering phase. With the foundations laid and churches founded, a new set of issues had to be faced. The success in establishing all these new churches produced a new set of problems.

To hear critics pronounce the modern missionary movement a failure is not uncommon. K. M. Panikkar, the Indian historian, in his important book, *Asia and Western Dominance* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1953), reaches this conclusion in relation to the missionary impact on Asia during the Vasco da Gama era (ca. 1500-1950).

In the history of the Christian movement the nineteenth century has been called the Great Century because of the unprecedented outpouring of energy and initiative by the churches of the West. Numerous new mission agencies were organized, hundreds of dollars were raised, and missions were sent to every corner of the globe. Shortly before World War II Archbishop William Temple remarked that the "great new fact of our time" was the emergence of the Christian church worldwide.

How then do we reconcile these contradictory judgments about the success of missions? We can answer this from several angles. The new *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Oxford, 1982) gives a statistical profile which measures changes in the worldwide church generation by generation. Progress since 1800:

1800 59 generations after Christ
23.1% Christian* (86.5% white)
Printed Scriptures: 67 languages

1850 61 generations after Christ
27.2% Christian (85.2% white)
Printed Scriptures: 205 languages

1900 62 generations after Christ
34.4% Christian (81.1% white)
Printed Scriptures: 537 languages

1914 63 generations after Christ
34.4% Christian (76.2% white)
Printed Scriptures: 676 languages

1950 64 generations after Christ
34.1% Christian (63.5% white)
Printed Scriptures: 1,052 languages

**As percentage of total world population*

1980 65 generations after Christ
32.8% Christian (50.5% white)
Printed Scriptures: 1,811 languages

2000 66 generations after Christ
Estimate: 32.3% Christian (39.8% white)

Other facts help to fill out the picture.

- Today Christians are in the majority in two-thirds of the world's 223 countries.
- Christians comprise less than 1 percent of the population in twenty-four countries.
- Christians comprise less than 0.1 percent in six countries (Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Somalia, North Yemen, and South Yemen).
- Christianity grew at the rate of 1.2 percent per decade during the nineteenth century. Since 1945 a new trend has set in: Christianity is now declining at the rate of 1 percent per decade.
- While the number of Christian adherents has continued growing, as a percentage of total world population the number is declining.
- Continued overall growth is possible only because of higher rates of growth in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

—Latin America today contains the single largest block of Roman Catholics in the world.

—The continent of Africa is expected to have the largest number of Christians of any continent by the year 2000.

- Europe and North America are registering the major defections to the faith.

—Defectors from the Christian faith in the West number 1,820,500 former Christians per year.

—Losses in the West are slightly more than gains in the Two Thirds World.

Growth in the Two Thirds World is especially among the poor and oppressed who hear in the gospel a message about God's love and justice on behalf of the poor and oppressed.

The significant fact which emerges out of this statistical analysis is the shift in the center for the Christian world from the North Atlantic to the Two Thirds World, with Africa being the single largest part of that new center. If we were to measure the success of the modern missionary movement in terms of its impact only in countries to which missionaries were sent, the picture would be even more dramatic. But when these figures are included with those of the West, the result is less apparent.

The challenge which emerges out of this sketch is to awaken the church in the West to its true condition. Its rate of decline is so rapid that even the steady growth in the number of new adherents in the Two Thirds World can no longer offset it. The emerging frontier in mission is the West.—Wilbert R. Shenk

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